

OF THE  
TERM  
OF  
LIFE.

VIZ.

Whether it is fix'd or alterable;  
With the Sense of the *Jewish* Doctors,  
both Ancient and Modern, touching  
PREDESTINATION and FREE-WILL.

Also an Explication of several obscure  
*Passages* and *Prophecies* in the Old Testa-  
ment; together with some remarkable Cu-  
stoms observ'd by the *Jews*.

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*Written in Latin by the Famous MENASSEH  
BEN-ISRAËL the Jew, and now Translated  
into English.*

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To which are added, the Author's Life, never be-  
fore Publish'd; and a Catalogue of his Works.

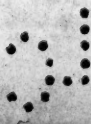
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T O

*Colthrop Parker, Esq;*

S I R,

I Hope you'll Pardon my Presumption, if I trouble you to read this Book, in your leisure hours (if you have any from doing Good) which I partly Translated, and partly Compos'd in Mine. I must humbly Request another Favour from you, and that is your Protection (if it is not an Encroachment) because you are qualifi'd to Judge of the Performance, and (if you approve of it) to defend me against

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### *The Dedication.*

gainst the unmannerly Censures of ill-natur'd Men. I take this Opportunity likewise, publickly to acknowledge my great Obligations both to you, and your good Lady, whose extensive Charity, and exemplary Devotion, prevent my just Commendations of her to the World. The fulsome Flatteries which usually fill the Dedications of indigent, cringing Authors, oblige me not to display your Vertues, and Accomplishments, which have been conspicuous, both in our own, and Neighbouring Countries. It was the Opinion of the most Learned Rabbins, (as *Menasseh Ben-Israel* informs us in this Treatise) That a Man's Life might be prolong'd by meditating

*The Dedication.*

tating on God's Law, and keeping his Commandments ; now since this seems highly probable, I have good Reason to believe, you may religiously expect as long, and as Happy a Course of years, as some of your pious Family have arriv'd to. I may without the imputation of Flattery, confidently affirm the same of your sincerely vertuous Lady.

That you may both enjoy, (till a good old Age gently leads you to decay) the same Health, and the same Comforts you do now, is the hearty Wish of,

*Your most obliged*

*Humble Servant,*

P. T.





## The Translator's Preface.

**I** Doubt not but the World will expect (according to Custom) the Reasons that induc'd me to *Translate*. Now some of them are these; 1st. My own Diversion. 2d. Because I imagin'd, that others would have the same satisfaction, and improvement, that I had in the perusal. 3d. ( and I'll add no more ) because the Original is very scarce, and not to be purchased at any Rate.

I have done so much Justice to my Author (and no more is to be expected) that as he has express'd himself in plain and easie Latin, I have endeavour'd to make him speak clear, familiar, and unaffected English. His thoughts are not very bright in the Original, and therefore you must expect no mighty Splendour in the Translation. As his Stile is not very Polite, so there is no *la Cadence des Perodes* ( as the Frenchman says ) in mine. As Modesty and Humility were conspicuous in his Temper, so likewise are they discernible in the Proposals of his Sentiments. He delivers other Men's with fidelity and candour, and his own with ingenuity and submission. His Judgment is solid, and his Argument strenuous, and if his Reasons are not so fine as other Men's, yet they are just and impartial.

This

## *The Translator's Preface.*

This Treatise was begun at the Request of *Jc. Beverovicus* ( a Senator and Professor of Physick in *Dort*,) who had, not many Years before with several others, ( as *Episcopus, Merfennus, Rivetus, C. Barlaeus, Vossius*, &c. engag'd in the same Controversie. But not being fully contented with the various Opinions of Christian Writers upon these Subjects, he importun'd this Author to inform him likewise what the Eminent *Rabbins* and *Talmudick* Doctors said about them; for fear (as he tells us himself) it would be a great injury to his Profession, did Men believe, that the Time of their Death was so absolutely determin'd by God, that they could neither die sooner or live longer than that fatal Period, whether they took the Advice and Prescriptions of the Physicians or not. I must confess I have omitted in the Translation his numerous Quotations, because scarce any Man has half of the Authors to consult, and if he had, the Advantage would not be very great. Some Men of late have not been very just to their Authors, but I declare plainly I believe he is. Some places ( but very few ) I have not translated, because the Sense is the same in other Parts.

I must declare something else too, and that is, that I am not of those Men's minds and humour that grow conceited with an Author ; and if there be any thing true or good



## *The Translator's Preface.*

good in a Book, are presently extravagant in extolling it; who please themselves with what they do not understand, and would fain have all the World admire it with them. I have a great and true respect for the Author, and some of his Works (perhaps) deserve as favourable a Reception as most of our late Modern Christians. Here is enough in this to improve the Knowledge of a wise Man, and very few of those *Rabbinical* Fables, that rather divert, than instruct the Reader. I am sure *Beverovicius* thought it would be beneficial to the Commonwealth of Learning (as he tells this great Author in a courteous Letter) and was highly pleased himself, to see the Opinions of the *Rabbins* and *Cabbalists* about this dark Controversie.

I contentedly expect the Censures of a Sett of Men, who value no Performances but their own; but let them empanel a Jury of the sourest Criticks, I bravely despise their Verdict, because I am sure of the Benefit of the Clergy. If they find fault with it because 'tis only a Translation, (and that no Vivacity of Wit, Strength of Judgment, Subtilty of Reasoning, or close Application to Lexicons or Indexes, are requisite to set up a Translator) I shall presently answer them, I only made use of a little discretion in making choice of an Author, that may perhaps be more serviceable to the Advance-

## *The Translator's Preface.*

vancement of Knowledge, and ( pardon me for saying it ) Christianity too, than the late stupid Defences for a lewd ill-govern'd Stage ; or the abominable Libels of all reveal'd Religion, and of our most holy Faith, that have been publish'd by the perfidious Underminers of them every Body knows.

Some Men I know will quarrel with me (but not sting me) for letting Women, and part Apprentices know what the *Jews* have said concerning these matters. But if I can improve any Man's knowledge, though 'tis a Cobler's, I shall not refuse to be his humble Servant at Command.

If the bold Maintainers of Mr. *Hobbs's* Sophistical Principles concerning irrevocable Fate and Necessity, are displeas'd with the Author or the Translator, I'll leave them to be confuted by the Learned Dr. *H. More*, ( Immortal. of the Soul. B. 2. c. 3. ) or ( what is worse ) by their *Necessity*.

My Author has divided his Treatise into three Books. In the first he maintains that there is a certain Term of Man's Life, and tells us how this was understood by the Ancient and Modern *Jews*. In the 2d he handles that celebrated Problem, whether this Term is fix'd or alterable. In the 3d he endeavours to shew, how God's Fore-knowledge and Man's Free-will are to be reconciled. I have translated all the Texts of Scripture

## *The Translator's Preface.*

pture (quoted by *M. B. I*) according to the last Translation of our Bibles.

Now because 'tis plain that I have some time, and Paper to spare, it may be expected I should declare my own Sentiments about these things. I am sorry I am oblig'd to disappoint these Men, but I will comply so far, as to discover (I have his leave for it) the Opinion of an intimate Acquaintance. Says he, We cannot be too cautious of avoiding that Opinion, which Demure People have entertain'd of God's pre-determining the Acts of our Will, and of absolutely pre-ordaining the means, as well as the end. For this seems to cut of a possibility of Guilt, and a possibility of Innocence ; for what possibility is there of abstaining from that Sin, which by God's Determination is acknowledg'd to be inevitable ? How can that be a Sin which carries no contrariety to God's Will ; as being pre-ordain'd, and so Will'd by him ? This Opinion, (continues he) seems to rob us of our Understandings, and Wills, for what use is there of Understandings, if we cannot do what we know, or of our Wills, if we do not Act that voluntarily which we do ? How apt are Men when they look upon Christianity as a Chain; only of fatal Causes, and affix all Events to a necessary Concatination of Causes, to throw off all thoughts of a Judgment to come, and to under-



## *The Translator's Preface.*

undervalue all Threats which might restrain their Impieties, and all Rewards that might oblige them to Obedience; and so run into those Extreams which are opposite to God's Laws, and irreconcilable to the Civil Constitutions of Men; for he that conceits himself led by such irresistible Decrees, will not only prosecute his own Fancie, (and so transgress) but even hate all Laws, and all those too, who are by Duty oblig'd to punish them for their Extravagancies.

This is all I shall offer now, because I am told (by a very great Man of our Church) in his Discourse of Death, *Sect. 5. p. 186.* That these things will be Disputes as long as the World lasts, unless Men grow wiser than to trouble themselves with such Questions as are above their reach, and which they can never have a clear Notion, and Perception of.

The Reason of concealing my Name, is too great to be inserted here, but when I have another Opportunity, I will shew that I am not ashamed of it.

I have presented the World with the best Account of *Menasseh Ben-Israel's* Life, that I could pick up in his own Writings, or in common Conversation. If any one can oblige me with any thing more remarkable, I hope I shall have room to insert that, and my Thanks in another Edition.

*Farewel.*

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THE  
LIFE  
OF

*Menasseh Ben-Israel.*

**M**ENASSEH Ben-Israel was born in Portugal about the Year 1604, in the Reign of Philip the III. King of Spain. His Father was Joseph Ben-Israel, a rich and eminent Merchant. His Mothers Name was Rachel Soeira, who was descended from an Honourable Family.

*His Father being persecuted, by the Spanish Inquisition, for his Religion, and having lost his Goods, and almost his Life, (for he was three times most barbarously Tortur'd) privately made*  
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*his Escape to Holland with his Wife and Children, Ephraim and Menasseh. Not long after his Arrival, Menasseh was committed to the Care of R. Isaac Uziel, who instructed him in the Hebrew Language; in which he made so great a Proficiency, that at the Age of Eighteen Tears, he succeeded his Master in the Synagogue at Amsterdam, where he Preach'd and explain'd the Talmud for several Tears together. Of the exact time of his Marriage, I cannot at present be inform'd: But his Wife's Name was Rachel, of the Family of Abravanel, (Councillour to the King of Spain) whose Pedegree some of the Jews (I know not upon what grounds) derive from David. He had by her two Sons, (Joseph and Samuel) and one Daughter, nam'd Grace. His Circumstances being very low, (for his Salary from the Synagogue, was not above fifty Dollars per annum) he was forc'd to send to his Brother Ephraim, at Brasil, to put him in a method to mend his Fortunes by Merchandize. In the mean time he apply'd himself to the Study of Philosophy, and the Holy*



*Menasseh Ben-Israel.*      *iii*

*Holy Scriptures, to which he was addicted, even from his Child-hood. He maintain'd a good Correspondence with several Learn'd, and Ingenious Men of his time, and was deservedly Honour'd, and Respected by them, as I shall shew in its proper place. But after he was engag'd (to his unexpressible Grief) in a way of Traffick, he was very much diverted from the Prosecution of his beloved Studies. Great part of his time, was taken up in the Press, for he Printed all his Books with his own Letters, and at his own Expence; so that considering his Attendance in the Synagogue, his Care of the Prejs, and necessary Employment in his Domestick Affairs, he had no opportunity to discharge the common Offices of Friendship. Notwithstanding all this, (upon an Invitation) he came into England, in the times of the execrable, and un-natural Rebellion. His stay here was but short, because he did not meet with that Encouragement which he expected. However he had the joyful Satisfaction, to contribute to the Settlement of those of his own Religion in this Country.*

*And as I am inform'd, he was once civilly entertain'd by the Protector at his Table; he had frequent Conferences with some of the Eminent covenanting Divines of those unhappy times, but I believe he was too honest, and sincere to approve of their unjust Practices, whatever he thought of their enormous Principles. His fore-fathers indeed had Crucified the True Messias, whom they call'd the King of the Jews: But he must needs be displeas'd with them, who had Martyr'd him, who in some Respects bore the Injuries, and Affronts that were put upon his Great Master. For they laid to his Charge things that he knew not. This, I say, might reasonably be disagreeable to him, because it renew'd (as it were) the remembrance of his Predecessors Shame, Cruelty, and Punishment. And he might Fancie, that what they suffer'd for the Crucifixion of one, these might suffer for the Decol-lation of the other.*

*When he departed from England, he went into Zealand, and as I was inform'd (by that most courteous and ingeni-*

## *Menasseh Ben-Israel.* V

ous Jew, *Mr. Gomefera*) he breath'd his last (about the fifty third Year of his Age) at Middleborough; but by the Generosity of the Jews of Amsterdam, his Body was brought thither, and decently inerr'd at their Expence.

He left one of his Sons behind him in England, who married into a Credible Family, but did not long survive his good Father, leaving behind him only one Child. How his other Son and Daughter were dispos'd of I cannot yet Learn.

I hope I shall incur no Man's Censure, if I present the World with a short Character of this great Rabbin. He was in his Opinion a Pharisee, (as it seems they are all at this time) but of a Temper directly contrary to those, who are describ'd to us by the Evangelists. All the time he could spare from urgent Business, he spent among the best Authors of all Classes, as will appear to any one that consults his Writings. Though he was not a Gassendus in Philosophy, or a Grotius in Divinity; yet he was reputed the most celebrated Rabbin of his Age. His chiefest Applica-



tion was to illustrate the Books of the Old Testament, and he has succeeded so well in this Undertaking, that his Works are almost a good Comment upon it. He was always industrious, careful, and frugal; his Apprehension was quick, his Judgment solid, and his Reason not too severe, and subtle. He was a loving Husband, a kind Father, and a peaceable Subject. He was of a modest, sober and affable Temper.

I shall beg Leave to digress into one Instance of this, which was imparted to me by an Honoured Friend. Being about to make his Tour in the united Provinces, he acquainted his Tutor (a Worthy and Learned Fellow of Queens College in Cambridge) with his Resolution. Upon this kind Information, his Tutor requested the Favour of him, to purchase two Hebrew Books that were very uncommon, and withal added, That he thought Menasseh Ben-Israel was the likeliest Person to procure them for him, or satisfy him concerning them. Upon this Gentleman's Arrival at Amsterdam, he immediately enquir'd out  
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this Eminent Rabbin ; and in a little time after made him a Visit, which was as civilly receiv'd, as paid. He told our Great Author the occasion of his Coming, and desir'd him (if possible) to help him to two Hebrew Books, which could not be purchas'd in England. He readily comply'd with this Request, and at the same time cut these Books out of a large Volume, in which they had been bound up, with others of the same Language. I need not express the Pleasure this Learned Jew had in granting this Courtesie, or the Gentleman in receiving it, or the great Obligation the ingenious Tutor had to both. But to proceed: The Study of the Scriptures made him passionately delight in Devout Contemplations. In Truth, he was a Man of a singular Vertue, and Integrity of Mind, and seem'd to want no Accomplishment, but the Faith of a Christian. Several Worthy Men of this Nation, (viz. Dr. Nath. Homes, Dr. Jessey, Mr. Boyle,) as well as of his own, and of other Places settled a Correspondence with him, and have

*not been backward to give him just Encomiums. But especially that Learned Senator, and Physician of Dort, Beverovicus, maintain'd an intimate Friendship with him, as long as he liv'd.*

*He was of a middle Stature, and inclining to Fatness. He always wore his own Hair, which (many years before his Death) was very Grey; so that his Complexion being pretty fresh, his Demeanor Graceful, and Comely, his Habit plain and decent, he Commanded an awful Reverence which was justly due to so venerable a Deportment: In short, he was un homme sans Passi-on, sans legiereté, mais Helas! sans opulence.*

*I cannot but observe here (with the Readers leave) that some People have unaccountably reach'd out their Malice against the Jews, who were once the only People of God. It is true some of them, about Seventeen hundred years ago ignorantly (but barbarously) Crucified our blessed Redeemer; Acts 3. 17. 13. 27. but alas! That perverse Generation miserably smarted for it, as the Learned Josephus*



## *Menasseh Ben-Israel.* ix

*sephus in his Wars of the Jews faithfully records. I shall not pretend to give an Abridgment of his Works, especially after the Endeavours of a late Excellent Author: But I shall only briefly discover, how and where they were dispers'd after the Destruction of their Great City.*

*When their Sins were ripe for Vengeance, God sent the Roman Armies, to inflict that Punishment which was so often foretold. Some of them miraculously escap'd to Pella, others either fell by their Neighbours, or their Enemy's Sword; 16000 were sent to Rome at one Time by Titus, to augment the Glory and Pomp of his Father's Triumph, and he sold no less than 100000 Slaves. Not many Years after, Adrian the Emperour ruin'd the whole Country, and transplanted many into Spain; these dispers'd into France and England, but were banish'd in a little Time from these Places. In some Ages after they crept into these Countries again, but were banish'd from Spain in the Year 1500, and then dispers'd into Africk, Italy, Germany, the*  
*Low*

*Low Countries, Constantinople, and the Dominion of the Turk, where they remain in great Numbers at this Time, and are very often employ'd in the Receipt of Custom, to the great Advantage of the Government. The Visiers and Bashaws have such respect for them, that they generally (as Sir Henry Blunt informs us) admit them into their Counsel. William the Conquerour brought them out of Roan to inhabit here, and William Rufus favour'd them so far, that he swore by Luke's Face, his common Oath, if they could overcome the Christians, he would be one of their Sect. They had a Synagogue at the North corner of the Old-Jury, which was so call'd from the Jews living there. King Henry the Third founded a Church and House for converted Jews, (now call'd the Rolls) and in a little Time there was a great Number of Converts. They were often persecuted here in the Reigns of King John, Henry the Second, Henry the Third, and Edward the First, in whose Reign John Peckham Archbishop of Canterbury, commanded the Bishop of London to destroy*

all the Jew's Synagogues in his Dioceſs. And they were likewise all baniſh'd about this Time out of England. The Inquiſition (that Rack of Men's Conſciences) was firſt introduc'd into Spain, (in the Reign of Ferdinand the Fiſth, 1478.) by the eſpecial Procurement of Don Pedro Gonſales de Mendoza, Cardinal and Archbiſhop of Sevil, occaſion'd by the Apoſtacy of the newly converted Jews and Moors, who began to return to their old Superſtition. Now this in ſome reſpect had been practis'd before; for in the fourth Council of Toledo, A. D. 639. in the Reign of Syſenandus, the Apoſtatizing Jews were compell'd to perſevere in the Chriſtian Religion, leſt the Name of Jeſus might be blaſphemed, and the Faith which they had embraced, might by that means become vile and contemptible. This was ratified likewise by the eighth Council held at the ſame Place, A. D. 671. when Recesuvindus Reign'd over the Goths. After all theſe Iliads of Afflictions, they remain at this Day ſcatter'd over the Face of the whole Earth, and becauſe they continue peaceable, by  
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*the Connivance of our Laws they are not disturb'd. And good reason, for if ( as most learned Men agree ) they will all be converted to the Christian Religion, no place can be more proper to promote this Conversion, than a Christian Country. But alas! there are three Impediments to this, especially in Foreign Parts. 1. The Scandals of the Papists. 2. The want of Means to instruct them: And, 3. The Punishment or Loss, which by their Conversion they incurr. As many Papists are converted to Judaism, as Jews to Christianity. Several of our Countrymen, as Doctor Gouge, Doctor Jessey, &c. have by their Conversation and Charity, piously endeavour'd to begin this good Work. But that which must be most effectual to the Proficiency and Accomplishment of it, is, by letting them see our good Works, and then we may joyfully see them glorifying, not only our Father which is in Heaven, but the Son and Holy Ghost too. Let us not maliciously imagine that they have a natural unsavory Smell, but let us be careful that our Sins do not stink*  
in

in their Nostrils. We ought not to mispend our Time in railing against the Jews, but we must mortifie our Sins, those more inveterate Murderers of the Lord of Life and Glory: Our Sins daily spit upon him, and bind him, and load him with a Burden much heavier than that of the Cross. Let us unanimously endeavour to advance the means of their Conversion, as well as pray for it. This I am sure was the devout Practice of the Christians in the Primitive Church; for Clemens often takes notice of the Prayers that were offer'd up for the Jews in the Easter-Week, *Διαλαξ.* 5. c. 12. 14. Now this Time and this Country may afford us seasonable Opportunities; for I am not a little satisfied, that the Obstinacy and Stiffness they were once remarkable for, are almost worn off. One odd Fancy they still entertain (which Menasseh Ben-Israel has strongly asserted in his *Spes Israelis*) that is, That the Ten Tribes which were lost are now behind the Caspian Mountains, from whence they expect their Messias, who with Fire and Sword shall subdue the World, and restore their  
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*Temporal Kingdom. The Tribes that now remain are of Judah and Benjamin, most part of the former being settl'd in the East, the latter in Germany, Holland, Italy, and England. He that desires to see the History of the Rites, Customs and Manner of Life of the Modern Jews, may read Leo Modena, a Rabin of Venice, translated by Mr. Chilmead of Christ-Church in Oxon. 1650. I shall conclude with an Exhortation to the Jews (besides my Prayers for them) taken out of the 95th Psalm, Harden not your Hearts, as in the Provocation, and as in the Day of Temptation in the Wilderness, &c.*



*The Catalogue of the Works of Menasseh Ben-Israel, which he presented to Mr. Paul Felgenhauer, in the Year 1655.*

*Hebraicé.*

**L** Ibri 4 de immortalitate animæ.  
Pene Rabba super Rabot antiquorum Rabbinorum.

*Latine & Hispanicé.*

Pars prima Conciliatoris.

Libri tres de Resurrectione Mortuorum.

Problemata de Creatione.

De Termino Vitæ.

De fragilitate humana.

Spes Israelis.

Grammatica Hebræa cum novis observationibus.

Oratio gratulatoria ad Celsissimum Principem Auriacum.

Oratio panegyrica ad sereniss. Reginam Sueciæ.

*Hispanicé.*

Conciliatoris omnes partes.

Pentateuchus cum Margin. notis.

Libri 5 de ritibus & Ceremoniis Judæorum. Duobus Tomis.

Biblia Hispanica cum Commentariis.

De statua Nebuchadonosoris, 12°.

xvi *The Catalogue, &c.*

*Libellus Anglicus.*

De fidelitate & utilitate Judaicæ Gentis.

*Sequuntur Libri parati ad Editionem.*

De cultu Imaginum ipsiusmet Dei contra Pontificios. Latine.

450 Conciones in Linguâ Lusitanicâ.

Loci communes omnium Midrasini, sive, Sententiæ antiquorum Rabbiorum. Hebraicé.

Bibliotheca Rabbiorum cum argumentis lib. quibus adduntur diversæ impressiones, ubi & quando editæ, cum iudicio meo de quolibet.

Phocilides ex Græco in versum Hispanicum redditus.

*Libri adhuc sub manibus versantes, nondum perfecti.*

Hist. Judaica, vel continuatio Hist. F. Josephi ad hæc usq; tempora.

De divinitate legis Mosaicæ.

De scientia Talmudistarum in omnibus facultatibus. Hebraicé.

Nomenclator Heb & Arab.

De disciplinis Rabbin.

Philosophia Rabbinica.

# *Menasseh Ben-Israel,*

## OF THE

# Term of Life.

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## BOOK I.

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SECT. I. **S**OLOMON plainly declares, that there is a certain Term or Time of Man's life appointed afore-hand, *Eccles. 3. 1, 2. To every thing there is a Season, and a Time to every Purpose under the Heaven. A Time to be born, and a Time to die, &c.* For as he assigns a determined Time to all sublunary things; so likewise does he attribute the same to Life and Death.

That Place of *Job* is remarkable, *Ch. 7. 1. Is there not an appointed Time to Man upon Earth?* Most of the *Hebrew* Doctors upon this Place agree, that the Time is fixed how long a Man shall live. *Job* is more express in another Place, *Chap. 14. 5. Seeing his*  

B

days



## 2 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

*days are determin'd ; the number of his months are with thee ; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.* Here the Doctors are of the same Opinion.

This is likewise confirmed another way. *Moses saith, Exod. 23. 26. The number of thy days I will fulfil. And David, Ps. 39. 4. Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, and in the next Verse, Behold thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth :* Where R. Solomon comments, As a thing that is measur'd with the hand, so are the days of Man determin'd. *Solomon Eccl. 5. 18. All the days of his Life which God giveth him. Job 14. 14. All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.* From whence it is inferr'd, that our Life consists of a certain number of days afore-appointed. And because Life has such a *Term*, to which, ( as to a Goal ) Man bends his Course, hereupon the Scripture makes use of this Phrase, *Gen. 47. 29. And the Time drew nigh that Israel must die, Deut. 31. 14. And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die, 1 Kings 2. 1.* Now what do these expressions signifie, any other than a fixed and settled Boundary to which a Man is directed.

To encrease and diminish pre-supposes some certain Quantity and Number. Now the

## of the Term of Life. 3

the Scripture affirms, That *the fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shorin'd*, Prov. 10. 27. from whence it follows, that Life has a *Term*, and that one Man's is contracted, and another's enlarg'd according to their Works.

Besides all these Places, that have been produced, that in *Samuel* is very observable, where *David* speaks these words, 1 Sam. 26. 10. *As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into Battel and perish*; from whence it is very plain, that either Providence, Nature, or Chance may be the Cause of a Man's death, as I shall shew by and by. And it is likewise evident, that every Man has a certain day, in which this Life must be changed for a better. These things I thought fit to premise, that I might establish the Truth of what I am about to discourse of.

SECT. 2. Having clearly prov'd from the Sacred Writings, that there is a certain and definite *Term* of Man's Life; I shall in the next Place explain, how this *Term* is to be understood.

And first we must know, that wise Men do not agree about this thing, but differ in their Judgments, according to those Principles of Science, which they have enter-

## 4 Menassch Ben-Israel,

tain'd. The Astrologers affirm, that the *Term* and continuance of Life depends upon the Stars; and this was the Opinion of *Æsculapius*. Now, say they, if the whole Earth receives a vital Energy from the Influence of the Stars, ( and for that Reason some Part is fruitful, and some barren ) and likewise if the Times and Seasons are determin'd by them, why may not also every Man's life and death depend upon them too? Other Men ( that think a little closer ) are of *Aristotle's* mind, and assert that the *Sun and Man ingender Man*. And they will have it, that not only the *Sun*, which is the chief of all the Planets, but that all the rest of the Stars do concur to so Noble, so excellent an Effect, as the Formation of Man. Hence they divide the Operations, and various Offices among the Planets. In the first Month of Conception, they say *Saturn* dries up the first *Mass*; in the second, *Jupiter* kindly prepares and augments it; in the third, *Mars* separates and quickens it, and so every Month the Planets execute their respective Offices, as may be observ'd in *Plato*, *apud Marsil. in Atlan. l. 3.* and *Thomas Aquinas, contra Gent. q. 84.* From thence it comes to pass, That that *Conjunction* or *Disjunction* of the Stars, which predominates at the Conception of the *Fœtus*, produces the Seeds of future



*of the Term of Life.* 5

future Affections, Life and Death, Good and Evil; and they quite discard every thing else from the disposing of Men's destiny. This was the Opinion of the *Stoicks*, who obstinately maintain'd, that the immutable *Fate* of Men chiefly rely'd upon the Influence and Vertue of the Stars. There are others who attribute all that we have taken notice of, to the Position and Efficacy of the Stars, which happens at the Birth, not at the Conception, of the Child; but this is frivolous, because, all of them ascribe prosperous and unfortunate Events to the Celestial Signs.

The *Hebrew* Doctors confess, 'That inferior Bodies act by the Vertue of heavenly ones; and *Maimonides* affirms in his Epistles, That there is no one among the Learned *Jews*, or the Philosophers that doubts of it. Therefore, though they may dissent about the Creation of the World, ( while some say it is Co-eternal with God, others that it was created out of pre-existent Matter, and others out of Nothing ) yet they all agree in this, That the Generation of Sublunary things is effected by the Stars; but what that Vertue of the Stars is, or how it influences the Bodies, or Minds of Men, is still dubious and uncertain. The fore-mention'd *Rabbi* in his Epistles stiffly denies it; these are his Words:

## 6 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

“ Some of the Philosophers, ( who admit  
 “ not of Providence ) attribute all humane  
 “ Events to Chance, some of them to the  
 “ Efficacy of the Stars. On the other side,  
 “ some referr all to a fatal Necessity of the  
 “ heavenly Constellations, and will have  
 “ it, that the Riches and Poverty, the  
 “ Prosperity and Adversity of all Mep de-  
 “ pends upon the Position and Vertue of  
 “ the Stars; which are incident at the  
 “ time of their Nativity; and this Law  
 “ they averr to be inviolable. Both these  
 “ Opinions are very false; because, that  
 “ which imputes all to Chance, denies the  
 “ Providence that is so much celebrated in  
 “ Holy Writ; that which allows so great  
 “ Power to the Stars, and follows judicial  
 “ Astrology, is foolish. In the first place  
 “ (says he) I have look’d over all the *A-*  
 “ *rabick* Books that treat of this Science,  
 “ and at last discover’d it all to be mere  
 “ Vanity and Madness. The truly wise  
 “ *Græcians* neglected this Study, and none  
 “ of them have written any thing about it,  
 “ The *Persians* also esteem’d it idle. The  
 “ *Chaldaæans*, *Egyptians*, and *Canaanites*  
 “ only were addicted to this Vanity, be-  
 “ cause their Religion consisted in it for  
 “ some time. Afterwards offering at clearer  
 Reasons, he says, “ That our Law, and all  
 “ the Philosophers acknowledge Free-will,  
 “ and

*of the Term of Life.* 7

“ and that Man is endowed with an absolute Power of pursuing Good, and abstaining from Evil ; as on the other side, of obeying his sensual Appetite, and disregarding the Dictates of Reason. Now if the influence of the Stars is so great over Men, where is that Liberty? If it is impossible for Men to avoid the virtue and impression of the Stars, why are there Precepts? What does it signifie to endeavour to extirpate vicious Habits, and to become vertuous, when Heaven had determin'd when we were born, what we should be as long as we liv'd? If Men's liberty depend so much upon the Stars, all their Care, and Solitude is to no purpose. Therefore says *Maimonides*, we ought to attribute all this to Providence; for Sin is the Cause of a Man's poverty, and his Repentance may make him rich. Prosperity and Adversity are to be imputed to every Man's works, because we see God promises Life, and Temporal Blessings to those that observe his Commandments. But if it sometimes falls out otherwise, that a just Man meets with Afflictions, we must submit to God: Because he only knows the Secrets of our Hearts, and the Reasons why he punishes and rewards. We may now evidently discover, how repug-



## 8 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

nant the Judgment of *Maimonides* was to that of the Astrologers, and what his Sentiments were concerning judicial Astrology.

SECT. 3. A great many very Learned Doctors are of a different Opinion, and unanimously assert, That some Vertue is deriv'd upon New-born Infants from the position of the Stars, and that Life and Death, Wealth and Poverty are ordain'd after the same manner. This is the *Fate* of the *Jews*, which is call'd by them, *the Ordination of the Stars*; and is usually prov'd by these following Reasons.

1. It is manifest by Experience, that the Prophecies of Astrologers commonly correspond with the Events, and that they have often foretold a short Life, or a long one, a happy or a miserable one. Therefore these things are ordain'd by the Stars.

2. Every one is sensible, that the Generation and Corruption of all Sublunary things depend upon the Motion of the Heavens. For we may discern, as the Air is more tempestuous or calm, so it insinuates it self into Men's Bodies, and as it is attracted for respiration, so it affects their minds. Therefore without dispute the Heavens have some Power over humane Bodies.

3. The

## of the Term of Life. 9

3. The third Reason is drawn from Authority. For the Scripture speaks thus of the Sun, and the Moon, Gen. 1. 18. *And God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night ; he made the stars also.* Here R. Moses Gerundensis asks, What is meant by that Dominion? It is that Dominion, says he, which the Stars have over the Bodies of Men ; upon which they impress several Vertues, according to their favourable or malevolent Aspect. It is said in the Book of Judges, Chap. 5. 20. *They fought from heaven, the stars in their Courses fought against Sisera.* Likewise in Isaiah, 47. 13. *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy Counsels : Let now the Astrologers, the Stargazers, the monthly Prognosticators stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.* Also Job says, Chap. 3. 3. *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a Man child conceived ;* where he refers all his Evils, to the time of his Conception, or his Nativity. From all these things the Vertues of the Stars are collected. The Talmudists also, in Tract. Moed. Katam. cap. ult. seem to entertain this Opinion. For they say that Children, Life and Food depend upon the Stars. And in another place, they affirm the same thing : For there

## 10 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

there Vices and Vertues, are attributed to the Efficacy of the Planets, under which every Man is born; and they take notice of *Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, &c.* In the same place it is disputed, whether or no the Reason of these things is to be found out at the Birth or Conception; here their Sentiments are plainly discovered to us.

Notwithstanding all this, we must take notice, that although this Opinion may be introduced among the *Jews*, yet they unanimously consent that the Stars do only incline, but not necessitate the Will and Choice of good Men. *Bradashi* (*in behinat Olam*) an eminent Orator among them, has these words; “When, says he, You  
“look towards Heaven, and consider the  
“Stars above, never imagine or believe,  
“that they have any Power over the  
“Will, as the ancient Astrologers fancied,  
“for they have no Authority at all over  
“those things that depend upon Free-will. As to such things which are out of the Power of Man, *viz.* Life, Honour, and Riches, all agree, *That they who obey the Commandments of God are out of the reach of the Planets.* And *R. Moses Gerund.* says, That God is above all, and can *Act, See, Dispose of, and Govern* all things according to every ones Desert. For this Reason, the *Talmudick* Doctors in one place, deny,



## of the Term of Life. II

deny, that there is a Planet belongs to *Israel*, and in another affirm it. Admitting a Distinction, they are both true; for as *Aben Ezra* remarks upon *Exod. cap. 34.* no Planet reigns over the *Jews*, while they observe the Law, but when they neglect it. Likewise the Prophet *Jeremy* says, Chap. 10. 2. *Be not dismayed at the Signs of Heaven, for the Heathen are dismayed at them.* He that is desirous to know more of these things, may consult the 18th. Book, chap. 2. of *Josephus's Antiquities of the Jews.* For where he treats of the Sect of the *Pharisees* (whose Opinion I confess I am of) he subjoyns these words. "They ascribe all things that are acted to *Fate*, but however they grant the Assent of Man's *Will*, alledging that God uses this moderation, that when all things are made by his Counsel, yet Man hath the Liberty of embracing Vertue or Vice. In another place, *B. 16. c. ult.* (Discour- sing of the unhappy Death of *Alexander* and *Aristobulus*, the Sons of cruel *Herod*,) he says, "It is reasonable to doubt whe- ther that Crime is to be charg'd upon the young Gentlemen, by which they had long incurr'd their Father's Dis- pleasure and Hatred, or upon the old King's Cruelty, and immoderate Desire of Glory and Sovereignty; or upon *Fortune*, whose

## 12 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

“whose Power the Reasons of the wisest  
 “Men cannot oppose. Hence we are  
 “perswaded, that she has settled before-  
 “hand all humane Actions which must  
 “necessarily come to pass; and this is the  
 “Power which we call *Fate*, because  
 “there is nothing but what it can accom-  
 “plish. So much for *Josaphus*. Here we  
 may take notice, that by *Fate* he means the  
 Vertue, or Influence of the Planets, and  
 he observes notwithstanding these, Man  
 has the *Liberty to be vertuous or profligate*;  
 and a little after, *that no humane Reasons*  
*can resist it's Power*: But Divine and Su-  
 pernatural ones can, such as fervent Pray-  
 ers, Alms Deeds, sincere Repentance, and  
 the like. He that has a mind to see a  
 more accurate Discourse upon this Sub-  
 ject, may be satisfied by the famous and  
 incomparable *Gerard Jo. Vossius*, in the Se-  
 cond Book of his most Learned Treatise  
 of Idolatry.

Now I have shew'd the Opinions of our  
 Learned Doctors, and of the Astrologers,  
 concerning the influence of the Planets;  
 I proceed to my Dispute about the *Term*  
*of Life*, which according to some of the  
*Jews*, is that which is determin'd by the  
 influence of the Stars. Thus *R. Bahye* very  
 often says, *That a Man's Life is decreed by a*  
*Planet*, in reference to that of 1 Sam. 26. 10.

Or

## of the Term of Life. 13

Or *his day shall come*: But especially the ancient Doctors in *Tanchuma*, are of this Opinion, who by those words in Gen. 1. 14. *and for days and years*, allegorically understand the days, and years of a Man's Life, which the Sun and Moon mutually govern. Thus much for the Opinions of the Astrologers.

SECT. 4. The Physicians are of another mind, for they (following *Galen* and *Avicenna*, the chief of that Profession) maintain, that Life and the Preservation of a Man's Body, consist in the Harmony and Proportion of the Qualities which result from the four Elements, out of which it is compounded, but especially in a due Proportion of *heat and moisture*. So that a Man lives as long as the natural heat continues; for being of a Fugitive Nature, it consumes the Radical moisture, and when that is dry'd up and the other extinct we die; so *Avicenna* says, *It is impossible that we should die, unless the Radical moisture is absorpt, and the natural heat consum'd*. According to this Opinion every ones Life depends upon a good Temperament, and from thence Physicians can foretell the Dispositions and Manners of Children that are to be born, not by gazing upon the Heavens, as the Astrologers do, but  
by



## 14 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

by observing the Fortune that attends the Mother while she is pregnant, but principally that of the Father: For *Hippocrates* affirms, *That Children inherit the Vices and Temper of their Father*; so that a Phlegmatick or Cholerick Father, begets a Phlegmatick, or Cholerick Son; besides, says he, The very shape of the Fathers is impress'd upon their Children. So that all that are born in the Lake *Mæotis*, have large and prominent Heads: And *Aristotle* thinks, that the Lameness of an Arm, or Leg may be deriv'd upon the Child. There is no necessity to assert with *Theophrastus*, That the very Substance, and every thing that belongs to the Child proceeds from the Body of the Father, *As the Head, and Hands of the Child, from the Head and Hands of the Father*; but it is enough to know, that Children are like their Parents in their Countenance, Actions, Manners, and, what is strange, in their Infirmities.

There are others that ascribe the good and bad Constitution, to the Vertue of the Planets, which Infants receive by means of the Air at the time of their Birth; and in my Judgment it seems probable, because the Sun moves the Elements, from whence those four Qualities flow, in which Life and the Preservation of the Body consist:

51st. This Definition of the Term of Life pleases the Jewish Doctors very much. The Learned *Aben-Ezra* declares his Approbation of it, and expresses himself after this manner: *We know that there is a certain time appointed for every Man, which lasts in Proportion to the quantity of natural heat and moisture; and a little after he adds, That this is the Term which David speaks of, 1 Sam. 26. 10. His day shall come. R. Joel ben Sueb. upon those words of David, Psal. 39. 4. Lord, make me to know my end, &c. comments thus, My end, according to my Constitution. R. Isaac Abravanel, upon the 38th. Chapter of Isaiah says, That a Man's Life is determin'd by his Constitution, and the quantity of Radical moisture. Thus we see, that the Hebrew Doctors, and other Authors understand by the Term of Life, a certain Period, which in one is shorter, and in another longer, according to their different Constitutions.*

SECT. 5. A great many Learned Jews generally consider this Term in respect of the Times. R. Solomon Jarchi, upon Eccl. 3. 1. says, *The time to be born is nine Months, and the hour of Death is uncertain. For the understanding of this, we must take notice, That our Life is limited to several Times. In the beginning of the world Men liv'd*

## 16 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

700, 800, or 900 years, consisting of 12. Months, as *Josephus*, *Lib. 1. Antiq. Lactan. Div. Instit. 2.* and *Augustine, de civ. Dei l. 15.* affirm. Afterwards God reduc'd this Life to 120 years, *Gen. chap. 6. 3* And the Lord said, my Spirit shall not alway strive with Man, for that he also is Flesh: Yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. I remember there are other expositions of this place, but (as two great Doctors observe) they are foreign from the Text. God shorten'd Man's Life for his Sins, judging it necessary to do so, that he might awaken his Conscience, by the Consideration of his short Life, and that he might not have so many occasions to Sin. As for *Sem's* living 500 years after the Deluge, *Arphaxad*, *Salem* and *Heber* above 400, and *Abraham* about 200, *R. Isaac Abravanel* makes this Answer: It is not usual to leap from one Extream to another without observing a *Medium*; so we must suppose that God would diminish Man's Life by degrees, and bring it within the Compass of 120 years, though scarce any (by reason of their Carelessness in eating) except *Moses*, arriv'd to that Age: For which Reason the *Talmudists* say, That *Moses* is meant by the words, *For that he also is Flesh*, because the Hebrew numbers משה. 345. make up *Moses*. Lastly, God shorten'd the  
Life



## of the Term of Life. 17

Life of Men in *David's* time, upon which Account the wise Men in *Gemara Yebamoth* say, that in his time the Years were shorter. For thus it is written, *Psal. 90. 10. The days of our Years are Threescore Years and Ten, &c.* Tho' the Inscription of this Psalm ascribes it to *Moses*, yet they will have him to be another Prophet, not the Law-giver, or that *David* indicted it in *Moses's* Name. But for all this, *Moses* may be the Author, for as much as he, by his prophetick Spirit, foretold how short Man's life should be.

Nevertheless, Experience demonstrates, that Man's life is more contracted, and those Persons who attribute this Alteration to the Substance of our Food, the Position of the Heavens, &c. are mistaken; because, as I told you before, it was by a Divine Dispensation; and this Reason *Chrysostome Hom. 2. in Gen. Philo de Gigant. & Lactant. 1. 2. c. 5.* allow of. What *Pliny* relates of *Agarthonius*, *Epimenides*, *Pictoreus* and others, is not repugnant to our Assertion, because he tells us, the Year of the *Arcadians* was but three Months. No doubt but some People, computing after this manner, have told us such strange Stories of old Men. *Valer. Taren. B. 6.* makes mention of an old Man, who at an hundred Years of Age, chang'd his Teeth, Skin, Hairs and Nails, and after that look'd very  
C young,

## 18 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

young, and liv'd as long again. A *Frenchman* nam'd *John Estampis*, alias *Joannes de Temporibus*, is reported by *Paulus Em. de rebus Franc.* l. 5. to have liv'd 300 Years. *Cardan* relates the same of a *Turk*, and likewise of an *Indian* that liv'd 340 Years. Though Nature has now and then her Monsters and Excesses, yet we must not easily give credit to these things, when they are chiefly founded upon humane Authority. I do not believe that the *Seres* liv'd 200 Years, as *Strabo* reports, or that the *Ethiopians* live as long again as we do, as *Solinus* imagines. There is no doubt but some Countries are more healthful than others; yet for all this difference of Climates, which make our Life longer or shorter, few People now-a-days exceed the Age of 120 Years. *Berosus* extends it to 110, *Solon* to 84, and *David* to 70. and this is agreeable to what *Trebellius* says, That the Mathematicians averr, that an Age cannot be extended beyond 120 Years. From all which we may conclude, that the Term of Life is to be understood according to the Ages, in which there are more or fewer Years.

SECT. 6. These are the general Sentiments of the *Hebrews* concerning the Term of Life, and these three Opinions in my judgment may be easily reconcil'd; for there

there is no question but the heavenly Influences which are deriv'd upon Infants contribute much to their Constitutions, which vary in several Ages. Upon this Account the Learned *Aben Ezra* ascribes the length of Life sometimes to the Temper, sometimes to the Planets, because both Causes hold good. And *R. Mehiri* in *lib. Mehir. Tebilot*, says, There are two Causes of Man's life, ( one in respect of Time, ( which proceeds from the Spheres ) and the other is natural Heat ) which changes in several Ages.

After all, the *Jews* do not believe that this Term is precisely and unalterably determin'd before-hand by Divine Providence, for these following Reasons.

1. Because God promises long Life upon the Observation of some of his Commandments, as *Exod. 20. 12. Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long upon the Land, Deut. 4. 40. and 32. 47.* Now if our days were decreed by God from all Eternity, this Promise would be vain, and no Body could exceed them, much less can God deceive us. Therefore it is in the Power of Man to make his Life long or short, as I shall shew hereafter.

2. We find several Persons earnestly desiring God to spare their Lives. So *Hezekiah*, 2 Kings 20. 2, 3. *Then he turn'd his Face to the Wall, and prayed unto the Lord,*  
C 2
saying,



## 20 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

*saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart. And David, Ps. 61. Cain, being afraid of Death, says, Gen. 14. 14. Every one that findeth me shall slay me. There are others that have desir'd to die, as Elias, 1 Kings 19. 4. It is enough now, O Lord, take away my Life for I am not better than my Fathers. And Jonah, Chap. 4. 8. He fainted and wish'd in himself to die, and said it is better for me to die than to live. Now if the Term of Life was absolutely predestinated, the Prayers of Hezekiah, Cain and David were vain, and those of Elias and Jonah superfluous. Hence the Talmudists in Guemara Berachot, say, That if any one comes into a City, and finds it in an uproar, he may lift up his Voice, and pray to God that he would avert that Evil from his Family: Or, if any one should desire, after his Wife is with Child, that it may be a Male, certainly such Petitions are frivolous, because when a thing is done it cannot be alter'd. This we may apply to our present purpose; for if all things were decreed from Eternity, it is absurd to be solicitous or careful about any thing.*

3. The truth of this Argument is mightily confirm'd by the words which God spake to Solomon, 1 Kings 3. 11, 12, 13, 14. From whence it is evident, that Solomon might

## *of the Term of Life.* 21

might ask for Life as a contingent thing, and when God conferr'd on him Wisdom; Riches and Honour, he promis'd him Life too, not absolutely but conditionally. *If thou wilt walk in my ways, &c.*

4. If the *Term* of Life is unalterably settled, no Man can prevent Death: And yet we find God exhorting Man to beware of Dangers, and the Occasions of Misfortunes, *Deut. 20. 5, 6, 7.* and in another place, *Chap. 22. 8. When thou buildest a new House, then thou shalt make a Battlement for thy Roof, that thou bring not Blood upon thine House, if any Man fall from thence:* Therefore it follows that the *Term* of Life is not fixed by an absolute Predestination.

5. *David* himself says, *1 Sam. 27. 10. As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into Battel and perish.* If by those words, or *his day shall come to die*, he understood the Day that was decreed by God, it was superfluous to mention the three kinds of Death: For which soever had happen'd, it would have been appointed before-hand. And if so, it is plain those words were false; for *Saul* might have been smitten by the Lord, as well as slain in the Battel.

6. There is not one place in the Old Testament, which affirms this Predestination; but we may only collect from the fore-

## 22 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

cited Passages, that there is a *Term* of Life, which (as I have explain'd it) depends upon the *Times*, the *Heavens*, and the *Constitution*. So *Job* says, Chap. 14. 5. *Thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass*; by which he means, that all Men must die. And *David*, Ps. 89. 49. *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?* And in another Place 1 *Chron.* 29. 15. *Our days on Earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.* As for *Job's* saying, Chap. 14. 5. *The Number of his Months are with thee*; he means nothing else but God's Pre-science, because God knew and fore-saw all things from Eternity.

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## BOOK II.

*Whether the Term of Life  
is alterable or unalterable?*

SECT. I. **H**AVING in the former Book prov'd, that there is a *Term* to every Man's Life; I shall in the next place enquire, whether this *Term* is so fix'd, that it is impossible to exceed or prevent it, or on the contrary, whether it is mutable?

All the *Jews* unanimously consent, that this *Term* is alterable, though it depend upon the Planets, the Constitution, or the Variety of *Times*. Hereupon, *R. Babye* says, that there is a more Eminent Power, above that of the Stars, which orders things by Reward and Punishment. The same is confirm'd by *Aben Ezra*, upon *Exod.* Ch. 23. Where ( assigning the dependance of Life upon the *Temper* of the Body ) he says, that the Natural Heat and Moisture of every one that serves God ) is augmented, and then a Man exceeds the *Term* of Life. Therefore according to this Opinion, the *Term* of Life is alterable.

## 24 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

This is the Reason that Men take such Care to preserve their Health, and when it is impair'd, to recover it. This makes them so often change the Air. This makes them drink those medicinal Potions, that are so nauseous. In a word, this first makes Men study, and then Practise Physick. And indeed, as it is very ridiculous to aspire to that Preferment, which by no Pains or Industry can be procur'd; so I think it exceeding simple to be careful about the Preservation of our Life, when the *Term* is *immutable*, and it cannot be prolong'd. Nay, it would be to no purpose, for the Earth to bring forth Plants, and Herbs (by the Bounty of God) 'for no other Design than the use of Physick.

But that we may establish this Opinion better, let us consult the 3d Chap. of Eccl. and the 1st Verse. In which place Solomon affirms, That the *Term of Life* is *alterable*. *There is a time to be born, and a time to die.* Here we see, that our Birth and Death are parallel'd, forasmuch as they have both a certain time. Now if by the hour of Death, that *Term of Life* is understood, which is unalterably decreed by God; then the same may be said of the hour of our Nativity. But if this is granted, the very Name of Nature is destroy'd; for by this means we are oblig'd to acknowledge, that God decreed the Birth

## of the Term of Life. 25

Birth of *Abraham*, his long Life, his Marriage which *Sarah*, her Conception and Delivery of a Son, which is absurd ; when common Experience makes it appear , that these things depend upon Free-will. If any one enquires, how we must understand, that there is some time of Life appointed ? Rabbi *Solomon* answers, The time of our Formation is compleated in nine Months, but that of Death alters, according to the Diversity of the *Age*. And as I said before, this is commonly the space of 70 years. This being premised, I conclude that the space of 70 years, or rather the *Term of Life* is uncertain and mutable, when the space of nine Months, or the time of Pregnancy, is so too. The time of our Birth is doubtless uncertain , for though the *Talmudick* Doctors do averr, That the *Fætus's* of dumb Animals are form'd within a limited time, yet they do not own the same of young Children. They make the time of Parturition three-fold, one at the ninth Month, which is common and usual , and this they will have meant by the word *Conception* , which in the *Hebrew* contains the number 271, for there are so many days in nine Months. The second time that a Woman is with Child, is seven Months ; hence in the *Jerusalem Targum* upon these words, Gen. 3. 16. *I will greatly multiply*  
thy



## 26 Menasseh Ben-Israel,

*thy Sorrow, and thy Conception, &c.* the Commentators say, That the word in *multiplying*, according to the numerical Letters of the *Hebrew*, makes up 212 days, which are equivalent to seven Months; agreeably to this, the Philosophers *Empedocles*, *Plotinus*, and *Macrobius*, say, That a Child can't live, that is born before the seventh Month. Some of the *Rabbins* are of an Opinion, that every one of the seven Planets performs an Office in the Production of Children.

The third time of Parturition is extended to the 12th Month. *Agellius B. 3. chap. 16.* reports, that a Woman was brought to Bed at *Rome*, the 11th. Month after her Husband's Decease. The Emperor *Adrian*, (by the Consent of Physicians and Philosophers) maintains that this thing is possible. *Bernard* mentions a Woman (which is scarce credible) that was 16 Months with Child. Thus we see, that it is ordinary for Women to be with Child nine Months, yet extraordinarily they may be Deliver'd before, or after that time; so the ordinary Term of Man's Life is 70 years, yet very few live so long. Therefore the Term of our Life is not so precisely Fix'd, but it may be chang'd.

SECT. 2. Man's Life may be shortne'd several ways, viz. by *Divine Providence*,

## of the Term of Life. 27

dence, Chance, or Nature. These three Causes I put instead of the three fatal Sisters, to whom the Heathens ascrib'd the Boundaries of Life. Thus a Man's Life is shortn'd by Providence, for Example, when a Man is cut off from the People, which Punishment the Scripture makes mention of; and by which the *Cabbalists*, *Aramban*, and *Isaac Abravanel* affirm, a Man's Life is taken away in the midst of his days, and the Soul after its Separation from the Body, is depriv'd of the sight of God.

Hence it is manifest, that our Life may be shortn'd by Sin, and prolong'd by Vertue. But I shall Illustrate this Argument by some Examples. The *Rabbins* say, That *Abraham* liv'd 175 years, which are five less than his Son *Isaac*, because he should not see the Impiety of his Kinsman *Esau*. *Rachel* also did not live out her days. For that which proceeds out of a righteous Man's mouth, is the same as if it came out of an Angels. *Jacob*, not knowing that she had stolen her Fathers Idols, curs'd her, saying, With whom soever thou findest thy Gods, let him not live, Gen. 31. 32. So they say, though *Joseph* liv'd 110 years, yet he died before all his Brethren, because he had exercis'd a great deal of Severity towards them; *Abijah* is said to be slain by the Lord for the Sin, by which he polluted himself,

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himself, saying, *Ye be a great multitude, and there are with you Golden Calves, which Jeroboam made you for Gods*, 2 Chron. 13. 8. With this agrees what *Isaiab* says, Chap. 6. 5. *Woe is me for I am undone, because I am a Man of unclean Lips*, and an Angel came, and touched his Lips (with which he had offended) with a Coal.

There are more clear Examples beside these, (in *Saul* and his Sons) which the Scripture expresses (after this manner. 1 Chron. 10. 13, 14. *So Saul died for his Transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not. God smote Nabal with a sudden Death*, 1 Sam. 25. 38. *And it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal that he died*. Here the Jewish Doctors note that those were the ten days which are between the beginning of the Year, and the Day of Expiation; which we, call penitential days, because every one ought then to Examine his Life, and consider what he has said, or done amiss. *Jeremiah* foretold the Death of *Hananiah* the false Prophet, Chap. 28. 16. *This year shalt thou die, because thou hast taught Rebellion against the Lord*. But what shall we say of that vast multitude, which perish'd in the Deluge? of those that were consum'd in *Sodom*, and *Gomorrab*? of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, and their wicked Accomplices whom



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whom the Earth swallow'd up alive? Of that grievous Plague which swept away so many *Israelites* in *David's* time? Is it not manifest enough, that their Lives were shorten'd by *Divine Providence*? Pertinent to this are the words of *David*, *Psal.* 37. 22. *Such as be blessed of him, shall inherit the Earth: And they that be cursed of him shall be cut off;* and of *Jeremiah*, *Chap.* 17. 11. *He that getteth Riches and not by Right, shall leave them in the midst of his days,* which *R. Kimchi* expounding says, *He shall die before his time.* *Job* says, *Chap.* 36. 12. *If they obey not they shall perish by the Sword.* And *Solomon* *Eccl.* 8. 13. *It shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days,* *Chap.* 7. 17. *Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish, Why shouldst thou die before thy time?* Upon which places the *Chaldee Paraphrast* says, *They shall shorten their days, because they shall die before their time comes to die.* Because God us'd to punish Sinners with untimely Death, therefore *David* prays, *Psal.* 102. 24. *That God would not take him away in the midst of his days.* The *Cabbalists* upon that place of the *Proverbs*, *Chap.* 13. 23. *There is that is destroyed for want of Judgment,* say, *That it is certain, that Men often die before their time.* Hither may be referr'd those Persons that are punish'd for their Crimes,  
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as *Joab*, *Shimei* and many more. Concerning these *Solomon* observes, *Prov. 19. 16. He that despiseth his ways shall die*, upon which words the Learned *Aben Ezra* comments, *Before his time, because the Council shall put him to Death.*

SECT. 3. There is another way likewise, by which Life may be shorten'd, and that is by *Chance* or *Fortune*. For this Reason *R. Judah Levita*, upon those words of *Samuel*, *Or he shall descend into the Battel and perish*, &c. says, That is an accidental Death. And *R. Joseph Albo* affirms, that it signifies a Death, that happens by *Chance*, and without any antecedent Offence, and merely by the Power of a *Celestial Sign*. But that I may explain this thing more clearly, I shall shew, what the *Jews* meant by *Chance* and *Fortune*.

And in the first place, they usually distinguish between *Fortune* and *Chance*. The latter of which they attribute to inanimate and insensible Creatures. For instance, if *Tyles* fall from a House, when the Wind blows and kill a Man. Here we have two things, 1. A natural Cause; for it is natural for the Wind to blow. 2. That which may be properly call'd *Chance*, for it is casual indeed that a *Tyle* should drop off, and kill any one.

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Sometimes they use it more strictly, and ascribe it to sensible, and animate Creatures, that Act by Instinct.

*Fortune* they call *Hizdamen*, and will have it to belong only to Men, or rational Creatures. Though these two things do differ, yet the difference is so small, that they are both very often comprehended in the same Definition; for according to some of the *Rabbins*, *Chance* and *Fortune* are defin'd after this manner, they are such things as come by accident, not naturally, or by Order and Design. For Example, if a Man by digging a Pit should find a Treasure. That *Claudius* endeavouring to conceal himself, should be discover'd by a Soldier, and created Emperour. That *Caligula* (as *Suetonius* testifies) walking out after Supper, should be unexpectedly slain by the way. These and such like things the *Hebrews* call *Chance* and *Fortune*, from whence they that have good or bad Fortune, are call'd fortunate or unfortunate.

Hereupon, *R. Judah Levita*, *R. Isaac Arama*, and *R. Solomon Jebet* have divided all our Actions into four Classes, viz. Divine, natural, casual and voluntary. For all things that come to pass in the World, proceed either from God's Providence, Nature, Chance, or Man's Free-will. This is certainly a very accurate, and elegant Distinction. The *Hebrews* likewise affirm,  
That



That God often deserts Men for their Sins and Iniquities, and then they are expos'd to *Chance and Fortune*; this they prove out of *Levit. chap. 26 27, 28. i. e.* (as *Abravanel* and all others expound it) *If ye walk not constantly with me, and uprightly, then will I leave you* (that were before guarded by my Providence) *subject to the mis-chances and accidents of the World.*

These things happen to those whom God forsakes, as it is written, *Deut 31. 18. I will surely hide my face in that day*, that is, my Providence and my Favour: Thereupon the *Jews* are wont to say, That any Vice or Sin (though not Mortal) is enough to make a Man obnoxious to *Chance*, which thing is confirm'd by them out of the Scriptures. For *Moses* advertising the *Israelites*, lest they should be hurt by the destroying Angel, speaks thus. *Exod. 12. 22. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.* And in another place. *Deut. 20. 5. What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not Dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battel.* Also, *22. 8. Thou shalt make a Battlement for thy Roof, that thou bring not Blood upon thy house.* From which places it appears, that it is in Man's power to avoid Danger, or run into it; for as a King does not regard the Promotion, or Advancement of a person that

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is not his Subject: So neither has God a particular Care of those who neglect the obedience of his Laws, but resigns them to the Scorn and Contempt of *Fortune*. The same also is maintain'd by R. *Levi Ben Gerson* (in his *Milhamot à sem. B. 4. c. 2.*) in these words, *It is not reasonable, that we should allow such a Providence, that makes it impossible that wicked Men should be capable of receiving that good which the Stars have ordain'd for them.* I only affirm, *That such People are liable to those mis-fortunes which the heavenly Signs incline them to, and that God does not protect them from those Evils that the Planets have design'd.* For this Cause the *Talmudists* say, A Man should never run into Danger, and then desire a Miracle for his relief; because he may be disappointed of that.

But here we must take notice, That many things may seem to fall out by Chance and Fortune, which nevertheless are order'd by the special Care and Direction of Providence. And therefore the *Rabbins* (commenting upon that Text, in *Exod. 21. 13.* *If a Man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand*) say, That God takes Opportunities, (as if it were by Chance) to execute his Judgments; which they illustrate by this Example. Once upon a time there were two Murderers, one had kill'd a Man by Chance, and the o-

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ther designedly, but no body yet knew when they did it. Now what does God do in this Case? Does he suffer these Crimes to go unpunish'd? No; but behold! God orders it so, that both of them should come into the same *Inn*, where he, that slew the Man accidentally, climbed up a Ladder, and tumbling down kill'd the other, but he that fell down (recovering himself) flew to a place of Refuge, that he might be secur'd from Prosecution, and so both of them were punish'd. There is another way by which *Chance* and *Providence* may concurr, as in the Death of King *Ahab*; for though it was foretold by the Prophet, yet the Scripture records, he was undesignedly slain by an Archer. We conclude therefore, that Mens Lives may be sometimes shorten'd by *Chance*, or unexpected Events. Souldiers are in the greatest Danger of these; for as *Solomon* observes, *The Battel is not always to the strong*, Eccl. 9. 11. so *R. Babye* notes upon Deut. 20. 5. *Lest he die in the Battel*, i. e. says he, *before his time*: From whence it appears that he who dies in War, dies before his time.

S E C T. 4. A Man's Life also may be shorten'd by natural means. As 1<sup>st</sup>. By an ill Habit of Body, which often proceeds from the Parents; for *Hippocrates* says,



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says, a Phlegmatick Father, begets a Phlegmatick Son, and a Colerick Father, a Colerick Son. 2d. By unwholesome Air. 3d. By the disorders of our Affections, and a debauch'd way of Living. Hence *Philo the Jew*, (In his Book of the Creation of the World:) says, That several sorts of Meat are apt to hurt and oppress the Stomach; *Chrysost.* (*in contra lux. & crap. Orat*) against *Luxury and Drunkenness*, says, as a Ship that is over Laden will sink, so a Man, that eats too much, hastens his Death. The Physicians too are of Opinion that much Meat, and of several sorts are prejudicial to the Body, and shorten Life; as it is reported, that *Vitelius* and *Julian* eat Variety of Victuals often in a day. Lastly, A great many Infirmities, which are the Cause of a short Life, proceed from an ill Digestion; these Infirmities the *Talmudists* say are 903, which are noted in those words of *David*. Psal. 68. 20. *The Issues of death.* We offend against the Rules of Health, by the quantity and quality of our Food, and in the time and manner of Eating. Hence *David* says, Psal. 34. 21. *Evil shall slay the wicked*; i. e. Such Persons do as good as kill themselves; and hither may be refer'd all that do so, as *Achitophel* and others. By All these Causes of a short Life, are best remark'd by *Maimonides*, in *Tada hazaka*, or in that Book where he had prescrib'd

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most useful Receipts for the Preservation of Health; he adds this, *Whosoever observes these Rules which are laid down by me, I dare avouch shall never be sick all his Life, or want a Physician, but die of mere old Age; except his Body was infirm from his Birth; or a Pestilence, or a Famine infest that part of the Country where he lives.* Here we may discern by what Causes Maimonides declares our Life may be shorten'd, viz. by an ill Complexion, by a loose Course of Living, by Divine Providence, by Plague or Famine. I proceed now to shew that our Life may be prolong'd.

SECT. 5. God, in several places, Promises long Life to good Men, and those who obey his Laws, as Exod. 20. 12. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long in the Land.* Likewise in Deut. 17. 20. and 22. 7. and in Psal. 91. 16. *With long Life will I satisfy him.* Prov. 28. 16. *He that hateth Covetousness shall prolong his days.* 9. 11. *for by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy Life shall be increased.* And in many other places this Promise is expressly given by God, to Holy and Religious Men. But for all this there is a great Dispute (among our Doctors) about the quality, and form of this Promise. R. Moses Gerund. thinks 'tis extended to old Age, i.e. 70, or 80 years; for which

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which Reason upon those words, *Exod. chap. 23. 26.* He says the meaning is, He shall not die in Battel, or by Pestilence, or by Change of Air, but by old Age. R. *David Kimchi* is of the same Opinion, and declares it upon that Text in *2 Sam. 7. 12.* *When thy days be fulfill'd, and thou shalt sleep with thy Fathers, i. e.* when thou art old, and hast liv'd the longest time, which is usually 70 years. Therefore, whenever that Expression of *Augmentation* occurs in Scripture, we must understand some Infirmary, or ill Temper, from which a Man is deliver'd, as in those Places, *Prov. 9. 11.* and *10. 27.* For if a Man keeps the Commandments of God, though he should be very sick and weak, yet God can recover him and prolong his days, as may appear from the forecited Texts. And if God doth grant it, he is Happy, and arrives to the Term of 70 or 80 years. Hence, R. *Joel Ben Sueb* (in *lib. Norah Thebilet.*) upon those words of *David, Psal. 61. 6.* says, That *David* desires no more than the ordinary time of Life; but R. *Solomon* is more exact, and says *David* means by Generations 70 years, for twice 35 years makes up two Generations, or 70 years. This was the Opinion of R. *Aquiba*, (before these two) that by Vertue and good Actions Life was increased; so *Hezekiab* liv'd 15 years longer upon the Account of his Repentance,



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for he was but 29 years old then, and had reign'd but 14 years.

Hereupon the *Rabbins* say, That God's *Augmentation* is more than the Principal, for all those computed together, make up but 58 years; so that he did not live to the ordinary Term of 70 years. This indeed is a great Punishment, but 'tis such an one, by which it may appear, that those Persons may have the Grant of a longer Life, who deserve it. To these things belong that Saying of some of the Ancients, *That God has a particular regard for those who live justly and righteously for the sake of their good Deeds, and therefore their Life is proportionable, i. e. he daily encreases their Life.* Hence (upon those words of Moses, Deut. 31. 2.) They say, *Now my days are fulfill'd, this day I was born, and this day I shall die*; for Moses was born, and dy'd, upon the seventh day of the Month *Adar*. So likewise the 365 years of *Enoch*, which he liv'd upon Earth, were proportion'd to the 365 days of a Solar year; whose Age being (as I may say) proportion'd, he was translated into Heaven. After this manner God usually consummates, and compleats the days of the Just. Therefore *David* says, Psal. 37. 18. *The Lord knoweth the days of the upright*; as if he took a particular Account of every day. According to these Men, the Reward of a long

long Life is nothing else, but the Completion of 70 or 80 Years, which some of them say no Body can exceed.

But there are other Men who dissent from these: For *R. Nissim*, *R. Joseph Albo*, *Isaac Abravanel*, and others, believe that all the Promises of the *Mosaick* Law are Supernatural, and for that Reason maintain, that the Promise of long Life is not limited within the Compass of 70 or 80 Years; and that a Man may live longer. Hence a certain *Rabbi* says, *If a Man deserves it, his two Generations shall be augmented, if not, they shall be diminish'd.* This opinion is most in vogue among the celebrated Authors.

Hereupon, those Doctors who approve of the Sentiments of the Astrologers, say, that where-ever the word *Augmentation* occurs in the Scripture, it is meant beyond the *End* determin'd by the Planets. They who think the *Term* of Life depends upon the Constitution, say, that God by a certain Divine Power encreases the Radical Moisture. Hence *Aben Ezra* remarks, that our days are not appointed afore, but are natural, and that Nature is wonderfully enlarg'd by good Works. The same thing is taken notice of by *R. Mehir* in *lib. Urim & Vetumim*. for this Reason, says he, the Recession of the Sun upon the Dial, was given by God as a Token to *Hezekiah* of

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the Continuance of his Life, because the Sun is the Fountain of all natural Heat; upon this Account, the Sun receding and retracting his Rays together with his natural Heat; he that through Age had impair'd this, might have it restor'd, and as it were grow young again. According to this Opinion (which I think the best) the prolongation of Life which God promised, does exceed any *Term*, whether *Complexional*, *Planetary*, or *Secular*.

SECT. 6. In the next Place let us see, how Vertue and Piety are the means to promote the Radical Moisture in Men. As the Happiness of the Soul consists in Goodness, or in the Knowledge of Vertue, and what is most commendable: In like manner, a Man's life is increased and renew'd by good Actions and Meditation on God's Law. Now that Life is enlarg'd by Piety may be evinc'd by the words of Solomon, Prov. 10. 27. Here the *Talmudists* say, this is evident from Experience. *The fear of the Lord prolongeth days*: He says this in respect of the first Temple, which lasted not above 410 Years, and under which there were not above 13 Priests: *And the years of the wicked shall be shorten'd*. He speaks this in reference to the second Temple, which continued 420, and there were above 300 Priests under that; by this number,



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ber, they mean a great many. And they further add, that they liv'd longer under the first Temple, than they did under the second, because they were more *holy*.

Furthermore, our Doctors assert, that there are 113 Bones and Nerves in a Man, to which the 113 Precepts of the Law correspond. Hence the *Cabbalists* say, that Men (by Religion and keeping God's Commandments) not only purifie their Body, so that of Terrestrial and Gross, it becomes Celestial and Spiritual, but even corroborate and augment the natural Heat so much, that it sometimes becomes immortal, as *Enoch's* and *Elias's* did. And this is not contrary to Reason: For, if according to *Galen*, good Diet preserves Health, and consequently prolongs Life; may we not allow the same Efficacy, nay greater, to the wise Government of the Soul? Now the Body receives Life from the Union of the Soul; therefore if this be manag'd according to the Rules of true Holiness, (which are not prescrib'd by *Galen*, or *Hippocrates*, but which we learn from Heaven) no Man can deny, but it is most reasonable to expect long Life, from a perseverance in that. I remember that I have read of a certain *Rabbi*, that wonder'd that Men should live so long in *Babylon*, when 'tis situated so low, (which Places *Avicenna* takes notice are very unhealthy)

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healthy ) but, when he was inform'd *that they often frequented the Synagogues*, he was very well satisfied. The like I met with in *Gucmera de Tabanit, c. 4.* where some People asking how they might prolong their lives, the wise Men answer'd, that it might be done partly by a natural Cause, and partly by a moral one, *viz. The fear of the Lord.* I have read also of a Merchant, ( who liv'd in the Island of Cyprus ) that order'd it to be proclaim'd, that he had abundance of sweet Spices to sell that were excellent to preserve Life, and when a great many People came to purchase them, he pull'd out a Psalter out of his Bag, and shew'd 'em the 34th Psalm, where David says, *v. 13, 14. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile;* by which he would intimate that Piety, was the best Aromatick to procure long Life. Besides, the Meditation upon God's word is the means to prolong Life, and restore the natural Heat. This is strongly confirm'd by Solomon's Exhortation: For that most wise King ( where he speaks about the Law ) says, *Length of Days is in her Right-hand, and in her Left-hand Riches and Honour, Prov. 3. 16.* Also Chap. 9. 11. *By me thy days shall be multiplied;* and in another place, Chap. 3. 8. *It shall be health to my Navel, and marrow*

to my Bones. The Reason is, because the Scripture saith, *Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord*, Deut. 8 3. From hence it appears that Men are nourish'd by Spiritual, as well as Corporal Food. And this I believe is the Reason why *Solomon* compares the Law of God to the Tree of Life, *Prov.* 3. 18. because as the Tree of Life ( which was in Paradise ) had such a Vertue, that whoever tasted the Fruit of it, grew young and vigorous again. So the Law of God ( which is like the Tree of Life ) has the same effect. In like manner, if *Adam* had not sinn'd, ( tho' his Body was compounded of a mixture of the four Elements ) he might have liv'd a great many Years longer, and at last his Soul, together with his Body, might have been translated into Heaven, as it happen'd to *Enoch*, and *Elias*, and all others would have enjoyed the like Privilege who had liv'd in perfect Obedience to the Law.

Hence the *Rabbins* believe, that when the Law was given to *Moses*, God plac'd the *Israelites* in the same State that *Adam* was in before the Fall. But that happy Condition lasted not long, by reason of their abominable Idolatry in worshipping the Calf. Therefore *David* says, *Pf.* 82. 7, 8. *I have said ye are Gods; and all of you are Children of the most high: But ye shall die like Men, &c.* What



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What I have mention'd already does notably illustrate and confirm that singular Example ( which is recorded in *Guemera Jebamot*, c. 12. of a certain Family in *Jerusalem*, out of which, whosoever was born seldom liv'd above Eighteen years ; which thing being related to *R. Johanan Ben Zachay*, and being ask'd what was the reason of it, he bid them enquire, if they were not of *Eli's* Posterity, whom God had threaten'd, saying, *1 Sam. 2. 33. All the increase of thine House shall die in the flower of their Age.* And it was discover'd that they were deriv'd from him. Upon which, he admonish'd them, that if they desir'd God would grant them longer Lives, they should very diligently meditate upon his Law. This wise Man's advice had its effect and experience shew'd it. And out of gratitude the Family would ever after be call'd by his Name. Our *Rabbins* likewise report, that the Sabbath-day on which *David* died, he was very intent in meditating on God's Law ; which when the Angel *Samuel* ( who is the common Executioner of Death ) perceiv'd, he could not execute his Office. Wherefore he contriv'd this Stratagem, that a high Wind should vehemently shake the Trees that grew in *David's* Court, that might occasion his coming abroad, which it did ; but as he was going down some steps, he miss'd one of them, and

and fell down; upon which the King (being in a Consternation) did not think upon God's Law, so his Meditation ceasing, his Life ceas'd also.

The *Rabbins* in this place are of opinion, that *David* obtain'd such Favour from God by his Sanctity, and his devout Hymns, that Death could have had no Power over him, if he had not committed Adultery, and Murder. *Save only in the Matter of Uriah*, says the Scripture, 1 Kings 15. 5. This is enough to shew that our Life may be prolong'd by observing God's Laws, and meditating thereon; so that if any one would perfectly and constantly observe the Law, it is probable that (like *Elias*) he would never die. For I believe this may be miraculously done two ways: First, by preserving the Radical Moisture in its due State. Secondly, by preserving the Vertue of our Food. As to the First, it is confirmed by the Example of *Moses*, who liv'd forty Days in Mount *Sinai*, without Meat or Drink; then the Divine Law (which was instead of Food) preserv'd the Radical Moisture in its due Vigour and Strength. The other is confirm'd by the Example of *Elias*; for the Angel said unto him, *Arise and eat because the Journey is too great for thee*, 1 Kings 19. 7, 8. And in the next verse 'tis added, *That he went in the strength of that meat 40 days and 40 nights*:

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For the vertue in the Meat was preserv'd as if he had but just eaten it, so that he was not sensible of any Fatigue all those 40 days and Nights. We must not forget the wonderfull Story of *Elias*, and the Woman of *Sarepta*; for we read how the Prophet said unto her, *1 Kings 17. 14. The Barrel of Meal shall not waste, neither shall the Cruise of Oyl fail.* And so it came to pass, for as much as was taken out one day, was restor'd the next: Thus the *Radical Moisture*, (which is like Oyl) is miraculously preserv'd, in its due quantity and quality, by a constant Course of Piety. I say miraculously, because it can't be naturally. And when I propos'd this Question to *Zacuthus* (a very learned and worthy Physician among us) he courteously answer'd (in a particular Treatise) that it was above the Power of Nature, and prov'd it by Reason, and the Authority of several Authors. Wherefore we justly ascribe it to the Omnipotent Power of God, and conclude that it can't be effected without a Miracle.

SECT. 7. This is a proper place to treat of the *Jewish Ceremonies* about the Sick. As soon as any one is taken ill, we immediately send for a Physician, in order for his Recovery. This we all know is lawfull, for God himself uses means in natural Actions; and which I will shew by this Example. Though



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Though God was able to deliver *Samuel* out of the hands of *Saul*, nevertheless he saith, *Take an Heifer with thee, and say I am come to Sacrifice to the Lord*, 1 Sam. 16. 2. By which means he might conceal his Design of anointing *David* to be King, who, when he was anointed, industriously endeavour'd to escape the hand of *Saul*. So *Gideon* made use of Trumpets, as natural means, *Judges* 7. 16. *Elisha* also the Prophet, (when he sent one of the Sons of the Prophets to anoint *Jehu* King,) commanded him that he should do it privately in an *inner Chamber*, 2 King. 9. 2.

Now if Physick is good and lawful, we may doubtless send for a Physician to cure the Sick. There were a great many Eminent Physicians formerly among us, as we read in the *Talmud* of *Samuel* (a skilful Physician, and Astrologer) who Cur'd R. *Jebuda* of the Toothach, which he had been troubl'd with for several years, and we read in another Place, that he Cur'd the same Man's Eyes. There goes a remarkable Story of R. *Ismael*, and R. *Aquiba*, who (travelling near *Jerusalem* with a Countreyman in their Company) met a sick Man, whom they presently Cur'd with an infallible Medicine. The Countryman seeing this, ask'd them who was the Cause of that Man's Sicknes? They answer'd, God. Why then (says he) are you  
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so presumptuous to meddle with another Man's Business ; God (as you confels) having made him Sick, and will ye pretend to Cure him ? But they (to apply themselves to his Capacity) ask'd him what Profession he was of ? Don't you see (says the Countryman) by the Instrument that I carry in my hand, that I am a Farmer ? Who then (say they) made your Land ? and who is the Cause of the Fertility of your Vineyard ? God, reply'd he. Why then (say they) do you concern your self with another Man's work, and eat those Fruits that God has made ? O ! (says the Farmer) if I do not Plow, and Cultivate, and weed my Ground, I am sure I shall have no Crop. Well then, (say they) honest Friend, have not you read in the 103 Psal. v. 15. *That the days of Man are as Grass* : Now Man is like a Tree ; the Dung which is laid to it, to make it thrive, is like the sweet Spices and medicinal Potions, and the Husbandman represents the Physician ; so they pleasantly convinc'd him of his Error.

From this it appears, That the Ancients approv'd, and made use of Physick, whenever God afflicted any Person with a Disease. The *Cabbalists* are of the same mind, for (commenting upon that Place of Deut. 32. 10. *He found him in a desert Land.*) They say a sick Man is like one that God finds

finds in a Desert, wherefore a Physician is to be consulted, who may cure him by Purges, or opening a Vein, and then prescribe a regular Diet which may preserve his Health. Hither we may refer, what several great *Rabbi's* have said; that when a Person has procur'd a Licence from the Magistrate to practise Physick, he is obliged to cure the Sick, and he may lawfully demand a Fee. But after all, we must not rely too much upon the Physician, and so forget God: For we must earnestly and devoutly call upon him; in which *Aben Ezra* agrees with me; but he so far differs from my Opinion, that he will not allow of a Physician in internal and secret Distempers, but wholly submit to God. *R. Vidal* has admirably confuted him, and commended the Use of Physick. But here are two things that deserve consideration, one respects the Physician, and the other the Patient. As to the first, a Physician ought to be very careful about his Patient's recovery, otherwise he may lose his own Soul. For upon this Account the *Talmudists* say that the best Physicians sometimes go to Hell. For there are some that pretend to cure a Distemper which they do not understand, others do not take notice of the proper time to administer the Physick; and there are others that leave all to Chance, and care not whether their



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Patient lives or dies. It often happens that a sick Man loses his Life while the Physicians are disputing about the Nature of the Disease. And perhaps, for this reason Physicians are sometimes call'd Murderers: May be *Alexander* too was of that mind, when he commanded *Glaucus* the Physician to be executed, because he did not recover his Friend *Hephestion*. I speak only of bold, ignorant *Quacks*, for the skilful and honest Physicians are call'd in the Scripture *Heads*.

That Consideration which should affect the Patient, is, that he must not too confidently depend upon the Physician, or natural Means, but chiefly put his trust in God; for this Reason is *Asa* reprehended for placing too much hope in the Physicians: For so says the Text, 2 *Chron.* 16. 12. *In his Disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the Physicians.* The Prophet does not reprove the King because he sent for them, but because he expected a Cure only from them, and never regarded God. Thus the *Talmudists*, among their Praises of the good King *Hezekiah*, reckon this deserves a place, because he *hid a Book of Physick*. Some think the Author of it was *Solomon*, others that it was a Book of Magick, and therefore hid by *Hezekiah*, because some People in those Times us'd to consult it for the Cure of their Diseases, and so neglected

ed to implore God's Aid and Assistance. For God is the true Physician, and he that putteth his Trust in him, may expect Ease and Comfort in time of Sicknes: Thus it is said, in *Exod. ch. 15. 26.* *I will put none of those Diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee.*

SECT. 8. The *Talmudists* say, there are four things which incline God to alter his Decrees, *viz.* Alms-deeds, fervent Prayer, a Change of the Name, and a Change of Works. And these are the four means which the *Jews* make use of in a dangerous Distemper; so they commonly secretly relieve those Persons who are in the greatest Exigencies: For as Money does, as it were, give life to a poor Man, so they hope that God will grant them their Life when they desire it. For this Reason, the *Jews* frequently collect Alms for the Poor that live in the City, or for those that live in the Holy Land, or for those that are in Prisons and Dungeons, or for any other charitable Uses.

This they believe is meant by those words of *Solomon*, *Prov. 10. 2.* *Righteousness delivereth from Death, &c. 12. 28. 21.* And it is confirm'd by Experience, for *R. Aquiba's* Daughter being almost stung to Death by a Serpent (which the Astrolo-

gers had foretold) was recover'd upon the Account of her generous Charity. Hence comes the Rabbinical Proverb, *Whoever says, I give this Money, that my Children may live, is perfectly just.* The meaning of which is, though we owe our Life and Goods, and all that we possess to God who gave them: Nevertheless, whosoever relieves a poor Man, in expectation of obtaining God's Favour, he ought not to be esteem'd simple, but perfectly just: So much for *Alms*.

The next Remedy is  *fervent Prayer*. By this means *Hezekiah* prevail'd so much with God, that he granted him a longer Life, though he had determin'd his Death. From hence comes that saying of the wise Men, *Though a Man sees a sharp Sword clapp'd to his Throat, yet he must not despair of God's Mercy.* By which they understand, that Prayer has such a Power, that it can reverse the Sentence of Death, which was pronounc'd by God against him. Therefore, when *David* says, *Pf. 107. 6. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he deliver'd them out of their distresses.* The Psalmist understands this of the time of the *Egyptian Captivity*: For the *Israelites* lifting up their minds to Heaven, humbly pray'd that God would release them before the appointed time. This is the chiefest Remedy the *Jews* make use of when they



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they are dangerously sick. And because the Prayers of many, are usually more acceptable, it is appointed that the Sick should be pray'd for in the Synagogues. I have read of *R. Hanina Ben Dossa*, a very pious Man, who us'd to judge of the Life or Death of those Sick Persons that he pray'd for. For, says he, if I pronounce my Prayer smoothly, and easily, it is a sign of its Acceptance, and that the Person will recover; but if it is in the least interrupted, or I hesitate, it is an infallible Token that he will die. This did truly once happen to *R. Gamaliel's* Son, who being very sick, his Father sent two Servants to *R. Hanina*, to desire him to pray to God for his recovery; which when he had done, he told the Messengers their Petition was heard, and so dismiss'd them; and after that the Fever abated, and great hopes of his recovery appear'd. The Scripture likewise informs us, that the Widow of *Sarepta's* Son was recovered by the Prayers of *Elias*, and that *Elisha* by his Prayers restor'd the *Shunamite's* Son to Life: Therefore without doubt *fervent Prayer* is exceeding effectual for the preservation or recovery of Health.

The third Remedy is, a Change of the Name. And this is very common among the *Jews*, when they are in great danger of their Lives; and it is perform'd in the

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Synagogue with extraordinary Ceremony, and they always add the Name, to the word *Life*. The reason of their doing it, is this; for, say they, though the Change of the Name does not alter the Substance; yet notwithstanding it causes some variation, in as much as every one is distinguish'd by his Name. Besides, they will have this signify an affection of the mind, and a resolution of amending their Life, which was so bad before, that they did not deserve to be heard by God. Some are of opinion, that when they change their Name, they change their Fortune; as appears in the Example of *Abraham*; for he was not so rich when his Name was *Abram*, as he was, when he was call'd *Abraham*. While he was *Abram*, he was only the Father of *Mesopotamia*, but when he was *Abraham*, he was Father of the Kingdoms of the World. So while his Wife was call'd *Sarai*, she was only a private Mistress; but when she took the Name of *Sarah*, she was Mistress of the World. In like manner *Jacob* after his Victory over the *Edomites*, was call'd *Israel*, in token of his future Conquests: For while the Captivity continued, the People were *Jacob*, i. e. trodden down by the *Gentiles*. So *Moses* when he sent the Spies to *Canaan*, chang'd the Name of *Osea* into *Joshua*; because fore-seeing (by his prophetick

phetick Spirit) *Joshua's* Success, he said to him, the Lord shall preserve thee from the Malice of the Spies. No doubt but there are other proper Names in the Scripture, which have a peculiar Signification. So *Esau* said to his Brother *Jacob*, thou art truly call'd *Jacob*, that is, a Deceiver, for thou hast deceived me twice, *Gen. 26. 36.* So *Abigail* truly call'd her Husband *Nabal*, that is, a Fool, *1 Sam. 25. 25.* Likewise, *Naomi* (*Ruth's* Mother-in-Law) said, call me not *Naomi*, i. e. pleasant, call me *Marah*, i. e. bitter, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me, *Ruth, c. 1. 20.* After the same manner, sick People have great hopes of their recovery from the *Etymology of Life*, if other means are us'd besides.

Lastly, The fourth Remedy is a Change of Works. This is last *in order*, but ought to be our first Care: For certainly the Repentance of our past Sins prevails much with God: *Nineveh* was to have been overthrown within forty Days, but upon their Repentance God turn'd the Evil from them. So King *Abab* upon his Repentance, intreated God that he might not see the Evil in his Days. Hence the *Talmudists* say, that Repentance prolongeth Man's Life. And in another place, speaking of the Efficacy of Repentance, they say, that God by reason of it will revoke,



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and alter his Sentence. These are the four supernatural Means of recovering Health; to which some add fasting, whether it be by those of our own Family, or the Poor whom we have oblig'd with our *Alms*. For when *Haman* threatned the *Israelites* with inhumane Usage, *Hester* and *Mordecai*, and all the *Jews* fasted very strictly. *Ezra* also approv'd of it, and frequently practis'd it. And it is said to *Daniel*, ch. 10. 12. *From the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thy self before thy God, thy words were heard.* Here we must take notice, that by a revocation of a Sentence or a Decree, *R. Joseph Albo* does not mean a Divine Decree, but a *Celestial Sign*. And therefore, when any great Misfortune is threatned to a Man by the influence of the Planets, that danger (says he) is remov'd by vertuous Actions. For instance, by the Power of the Planets the Ship, that a Man designs to go into, will certainly be cast away: Now God hinders this Man from his design by sickness, or some other way; in the meantime the Ship is lost, and the Man escapes. *Aben Ezra* is of this opinion; for upon the 24th Ch. of *Exod.* he says, Suppose by the influence of the Planets certain Ruine attends any City, and the Inhabitants thereof by sincere Repentance appease God's Wrath, what shall come to pass? Shall they

they be involv'd in the common Destruction of the City? No, God shall put them in mind to go up into the Mountains and high Places, that they may secure themselves: After which the Fields shall be overflow'd with a mighty Torrent of Water, and the City shall be destroy'd. So by this means the Event shall answer the Determination of the Planets, and yet the People escape too. For as *David* says, *Pf. 33. 18, 19. Behold the Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his Mercy; to deliver their Soul from Death, and to keep them alive in Famine.*

Which way soever the Sentiments of the *Rabbins* are explain'd, this is certainly true, that Piety is much more efficacious than the Planets; so that when the Sentence of Death is pronounc'd (as it happen'd to *Hezekiah*) that is not ineffectual, except God has alter'd it before. I shall conclude all here with the formal Speech, that the Scholars of *Pumbeditha* use when they go out of the School, *May he that is the Author of Life, grant unto us a long, happy, and an honest Life.*

## BOOK III.

*Concerning God's Prescience,  
and Man's Free-Will.*

SECT. I. **I** Am oblig'd now to speak something concerning God's Prescience, and those Arguments which are urg'd against Prognostications, because some of a contrary Opinion have made Objections against what I treated of in the former Books.

Thus they Reason : If God exactly knew all things, and dispos'd them in such Order, from Eternity, how can it be in the Power of Man to prolong or shorten his Life? For Example, if God infallibly knew from all Eternity, that *Abraham* would live 175 years, by reason of that sound and healthful Constitution which he had given him, it's very plain that *Abraham* could not alter that Determination. Now if this be true, it is demanded how God's Prescience, and Man's Free-will, (two such contrary things) are consistent together? I must confess, That I am very unwilling to engage in so nice and intricate a Controversie. *Euclid* once being ask'd many things about God, only reply'd, *Thus I very well know, that God*  
*abhors*



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*abhors those that are too curious, and inquisitive*; nevertheless, by the assistance of the Scripture, I believe I can illustrate and explain these things.

There were some Men heretofore, who, when they could not reconcile God's foreknowledge, with Man's Free-will, deny'd both; as *Cicero*, who, that he might maintain the Freedom of humane Actions, would allow no Prescience in God, which is well observ'd by *St. Augustine*. *Cicero*, says he, *That he might make Men free, made them Sacrilegious*. There are others that deny Man's Free-will, that they may establish the foreknowledge of God. Wherefore I design to confirm and settle these two things, before I proceed to a Re-conciliation. And in the first Place, to prove that God knew all future contingent things from Eternity; after that, I shall maintain that a Man may prolong, or shorten his Life as he pleases.

SECT. 2. The first is plain and indisputable, says *Maimonides*, That all Perfections may be found in God; but all Imperfections must be remov'd from him. And it is very evident, That the Ignorance of any thing is an Imperfection, and that God is ignorant of nothing; for it may be clearly prov'd out of the Scripture, that God had a particular knowledge of *Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses* and

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and several others, Gen. 18. 19. Exod. 3. 7, Deut. 29. 18. upon this Account *Moses*, and *Aaron* thus address themselves to God. O God, the God of the Spirits of all Flesh, Numb. 16. 22.

If we look into the Prophets, we shall find that they testify the same thing. *Isaiah* 48. 8. *I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously.* Jer. 1. 5. *Before I form'd thee in the Belly I knew thee,* chap. 12. 3. *Ezek.* 37. 3. *Dan.* 2. 22. *He revealeth the deep and secret things, he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.* But the most eminent Testimony of God's Prescience, is recorded in the 139 Psalm, for says *David*, v. 1. *O Lord thou hast searched me, and known me, i. e.* Thou didst know from Eternity, as well as now, all my Actions. v. 2. *Thou knowest my down sitting, and mine uprising, i. e.* all my particular Actions. *Thou understandest my thoughts afar off, i. e.* you knew my Works so exactly from Eternity, that you also knew my very Thoughts: Then he concludes, v. 7. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy Presence? i. e.* When thy Knowledge and Providence, O God, are above every thing, there is no place for me to fly unto, for thou art every where; from whence it follows, That God takes Care of every one. Hither we may refer, that which some of the

the Ancients report of the three Men, which God convinc'd of their mistake, because they thought that he did not know every thing. The first was *Cain*, who, when God ask'd him, where his Brother *Abel* was? (as if he did not know that he had kill'd him) answer'd, *Am I my Brother's keeper?* Gen. 4. 9. The next was *Balaam*, who, when God said unto him, *What Men are these with thee?* Reply'd, *Balak the Son of Zippor, the King of Moab,* Numb. 22. 9, 10. The last was *Hezekiah*, who, when *Isaiab* ask'd about the Ambassadors, which *Berodach-Baladan* had sent to him, saying what said these Men, *And from whence came they unto thee?* answer'd, *They are come from a far Country,* 2 King. 20. 14. Though it might seem to be a small Fault, for the King to offend against the Prophet, yet he should have consider'd, that he was a Prophet of God, who knows all things before they are transacted.

SECT. 3. I shall proceed now to shew God's foreknowledge of things that are future. And a great and invincible Argument of this, are God's Predictions of future contingent things, which were afterwards fulfilled. As for instance: First, God said to *Moses*, Exod. 3. 19. *I am sure that the King of Egypt will not let you go;* and so it came to pass.

2. God



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2. God foretels the Destruction of the Israelites, Deut. 4. 25: *When thou shalt beget Childrens Children, and shalt have remain'd long in the Land.* Here the Phrase *remain'd long*, according to the Hebrew, makes up the number 846. for so long they enjoy'd the Holy Land, and then were expell'd for their Iniquities, which depended upon their Free-wills.

3. The 28th. Chap. of Deut. contains some Prophecies, which were fulfill'd under the first and second Temple. I have treated largely of these in my Book, of the Divin. of Moses's Law, from whence I shall borrow some things now: The 28th. Chap. of Deut. wherein the Curses against the rebellious Israelites are inserted, is divided into two parts, beginning at the 15. v. and so to the 49th. and from thence to the end. Thus they begin, *Cursed shalt thou be in the City, &c.* the Reason is presently added, v. 25. *Because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me, i. e. for Idolatry, which was notorious under the first Temple; for that Phrase to forsake, always signifies in Scripture to forsake God, and to worship Idols.* So it follows, *The Lord shall make the Pestilence cleave unto thee, &c. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine Enemies, thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them, which did not happen*

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pen under the second Temple, (for then they were strong and valiant) but under the first. Hence *Isaiah*, (lamenting the great weakness of the People) says, Chap. 22. 3. *All that are found in thee are bound together, which have fled from far.* As to what relates to the other Curses, the *Jews* were sadly sensible of their Events, in the first Calamities that fell upon them, as in the Captivity of *Reuben*, *Gad*, half the Tribe of *Manasseh*, and in other Captivities of the Tribe of *Judah*. Then was fulfill'd that Curse, v. 30. *Thou shalt betroth a Wife and another Man shall lie with her.* But when it is said, v. 36. *The Lord shall bring thee and thy King, which thou shalt set over thee, unto a Nation which neither thou nor thy Fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other Gods, Wood and Stone,* no doubt but this must be understood of *Zedekiah*, and *Jehoiakim*, who were Captives in *Babylonia*, which was a Land unknown to them, and where they worship'd Idols. And tho' after the Conquest of the Holy Land, a remnant of the People was left, yet it is said concerning them, v. 38. *Thou shalt carry much seed out into the Field, and shalt gather but little in, &c.* v. 43. *The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; which must be understood of the Samaritans, who the King of Assyria, drove out of Samaria,*

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*Samaria*, and the adjacent places. Because *Moses* here leaves off speaking of the Destruction of the first Temple, he subjoyns the Cause of so great an Evil, v. 47. *Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God, &c.* so much for the first part of the Chapter.

The 2d. part begins thus, *The Lord shall bring a Nation against thee from far, from the end of the Earth, as swift as the Eagle flyeth, a Nation whose Tongue thou shalt not understand: a Nation of fierce Countenance, &c.* It is observable that the word *Nation* is here thrice mention'd; for three times *Jerusalem* felt the Power of the *Romans*, (when they bore an Eagle for their Ensign.) First when the *Romans* desir'd the assistance of *Hyrchanus* and *Aristobulus*, (the Sons of *Alexander*) against *Pompey*. Afterwards when *Sosius* succour'd *Herod* against *Antigonus*, the Son of *Aristobulus*. Lastly, when the City was besieg'd, and together with the Temple utterly destroy'd, by *Vespasian* and his Son *Titus*. Wherefore when *Moses*, says, *A Nation shall come from far*, it must be understood of *Rome*; and *from the end of the Earth*, it must be understood of those Nations, which *Vespasian* sent for to assist him, out of *England*, *France*, *Spain* and other parts of the World. In these Wars, all the Evils and Calamities that were foretold, happen'd to the *Jews*. 1. Famine, v. 53. 2dly. Great Distress, v. 5, 7. 3dly. Plagues,



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Plagues, v. 59. 4ly. a vast Diminution of the People, v. 62. 5ly. a Desolation, v. 63. To which may be added, the 6th. Evil, a Forgetfulness of their Religion, v. 64. which is chiefly come to pass, in this present Captivity, by Reason of the sad Calamities which the *Jews* undergo in *France*, *England* and *Spain*. Lastly, he says, v. 68. *The Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships.* Though *Vespasian* banish'd the *Jews* into several Countries, yet *Egypt* only is nam'd to their Disgrace, as if he would say, ye shall be carried Captive into that Land, out of which ye came with Triumph. Here *Moses* makes an end of the Curses of the People, but returns to them at the 39th. Chapter. Afterwards at the 30th. Chapter, he Comforts them with the hopes of Blessings, and a return from the utmost parts of the Earth, v. 4. In this all the Prophets imitate *Moses*, who, after a Repetition of a Catalogue of afflictions, that shall come upon them, subjoyn some consolatory Hopes; upon which Account the *Talmudists* report, That *R. Aquiba* laugh'd at the Destruction of the Temple, when all the rest of the wise Men lamented. And being ask'd the Reason of it, he answer'd, *After a Storm comes a Calm*, when these Evils are over we may expect some good; for God as certainly brings one as the other.

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4. That came to pass which God foretold to *Moses*, *Deut.* 31. 16,

5. God foretold that the Song which *Moses* was to speak to them, should not be forgotten, *Deut.* 31. 21. And this has been verified in their Posterity to this day.

SECT. 4. We read in the Scripture of many things that came to pass, which were foretold several years before.

1. In *Joshua* 6. 26. which happen'd many years after in the Reign of *Abab*. 1 *King.* 16. 34. In his days did *Hiel* the *Beth-elite* build *Jericho*; he laid the Foundation thereof in *Abiram* his first born, and set up the gates in his youngest Son *Segub*.

2. The building of a Temple in *Egypt* was foretold 600 years before it was begun. This Prophecy was fulfill'd in the time of *Onias* the High-Priest, who having obtain'd leave of *Ptolemy*, and *Cleopatra* erected a Temple at a place call'd *Bubastus*. *F. Josephus* (in his *Antiq.* of the *Jews* B. 13. c. 6.) thus relates the words of *Onias*, May it please your Majesties to grant me the favour to purifie that Temple which is Dedicated to no Deity, and is fallen down, and to build another in its place, to the most high God, in the same form and bigness of that which is at *Jerusalem*, where we shall pray for the safety of you

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you and your Children, that the Jews, who live in Egypt, and resorting thither, for their own Convenience, may be more useful to you. For *Isaiab* the Prophet foretold, that there should be an Altar to the Lord in the midst of the Land of Egypt, Chap. 19. 19. In this Circumstance our Rabbins agree with *Josephus*, for they refer these words to this Temple. But in *Seder Olam* they are of a contrary Opinion; there they say, That after the Victory which God gave them over the *Assyrians*, great part of them that were left were carried Captive to *Jerusalem* by *Hezekiah*. Now these Forces *Sennacherib* had levy'd out of *Aethiopia* and *Egypt*: Hence it came to pass, that these Men being convinc'd by the Greatness of the Miracle embrac'd the Jewish Religion, and returning into their own Countrey, erected an Altar to the Honour and Glory of God. And when Friendship and Commerce began to increase among them, and the Jews, they by degrees acquir'd the knowledge of our Language, according to that of *Isaiab*, Chap. 19. 18. *In that day shall five Cities in the Land of Egypt speak the Language of Canaan.* Thus this Prophecy was plainly fulfill'd.

3. Long before the Restoration of the Jews, and the building of the second Temple by the Command of *Cyrus*, King of the *Persians*, it was thus foretold of this



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Cyrus, *Isaiah 44. 28. That saith of Cyrus he is my Shepherd, and shall perform all my Pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built; and to the Temple thy Foundation shall be laid, he says to the Temple, Thou shalt be founded, not thou shalt be built: The Reason is this, because of the Accusations, and Complaints of Rehum and Shimshai (in the Reign of Cyrus) the Temple was not finish'd, (only the Foundation laid) till the second year of Darius, which was 22 years after. But when Cyrus had given abundance of Gold and Silver towards the Re-edification of the Temple, and had releas'd a great many Slaves; therefore it is said in the next Chapter, v. 13. I have rais'd him up in Righteousness, and I will direct all his ways, he shall build my City, and shall let go my Captives, not for Price, nor Reward, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

4. It was likewise foretold by the Prophet, that the Temple should be destroy'd by the *Jews* themselves: For after the tedious Lamentations of the People in the time of the Captivity, he adds these words, *Chap. 49. 14. But Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Thy Children shall make haste; thy Destroyers, and they that made thee wast shall go forth of thee, v. 17. This was fulfill'd when Simon and Jonathan, and others by their intestine*

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intestine Seditions, hasten'd the Destruction of the Temple. Whence *F. Josephus* speaks thus of the Wars of the Jews, B. 7. c. 4. *Who is ignorant of the Writings of the ancient Prophets, and their Prophecies, wherein this wretched City is foretold to be destroy'd by those that being born Jews, murder our own Nation, and now not only the City, but the Temple is full of the dead Bodies?*

5. *Isaiah* the Prophet saith, Chap. 54. 17. *No Weapon that is form'd against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in Judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their Righteousness is of me saith the Lord.* This Prophecy was also fulfill'd, for almost all Nations have oppos'd the Jewish Law, some by Arguments, and some by Force. Therefore it is said, *no Weapon (of War) and every Tongue, &c.* For Writers in the midst of their Endeavours have wanted Success. Then says the Prophet, *shall not Prosper, &c.* This is manifestly verified in the Example of *Nebuchadnezzar*, who seduc'd all the Jews to worship Idols, except *Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah*, who did not renounce their Religion. But what was the Consequence? God inflicted condign Punishment upon the King, and *Truth was restor'd again.* The *Græcians* also were no less cruel and severe to the Jews: For they compell'd

them to prophane the Sabbath, and omit Circumcision, but what was worse, to write upon their Garments, *We have no Portion in the Lord God of Israel*. And these words they were forc'd to burn in- to the Horns of their Oxen, if they would make use of them. After this manner the *Jews* were persecuted for 52 years; at last God reveng'd himself upon *Antiochus*, and all the *Græcians*, by the Subversion of the Empire and the Laws, while the *Jews* preserv'd theirs. In remembrance of so rigorous a Persecution, the old Men, whensoever they relate, the Edicts of the *Græcians* against the *Jews*, always conclude with this Speech, *And let Peace be upon Israel*. And here I may speak of *Emanuel*, King of *Portugal*, What Advantage was it to him, to compel the *Jews* by Cruelty to become Christians? He was so far from advancing his Interest by it, that it was a vast Prejudice to his Kingdom: For the Nation was almost depopulated, the *Jews* retiring into such Countries, where they might be more Civilly treated, and where they might more freely exercise their Religion. Besides, he died within a few years after; and after all, he did not obtain so much Honour by it as he expected. *Osorius*, the Kings Historiographer, *lib. I.* seems to rebuke him very sharply, and freely for that thing, when he says,

*This*



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*This was done neither out of Law or Religion. What then? Do you endeavour to oblige a Contumacious People to believe those things, which they so much despise and abhor? Do you pretend to abridge the Freedom of Man's Will, and check unruly Minds? But that is impossible, neither does Christ, the most Holy God, approve of it. He desires a voluntary, not a compulsive, Sacrifice from us, neither would he have our Consciences impos'd upon, but that our Wills should be invited, and courted to the Practice of true Religion; and in another place, he calls this Action wicked and unjust. See how the Prophets Prediction is fulfill'd in him, shall not Prosper, viz. while he endeavours to compel the Jews to renounce their Religion. Hither may we refer what is mention'd in Solomon's Song, Chap. 6. 13. Return, Return, O Shulamite: Return, Return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As 'it were the Company of two Armies. It is four times said Return, in respect of the four Monarchies, under which the Israelites liv'd: For the Jews are this perfect Shulamite. For as much as the Gentiles endeavour'd to divert us from the Worship of the true God, by the Promises of honourable and noble Rewards; yet the Shulamite courageously answers, That he does not value all the Honours they propose: For they are*

much inferior to those Honours, which were exhibited on Mount *Sinai*, to which the Hosts of *Israel*, and the Angelick Choire approach'd, as *David* expresses himself, *Psal.* 68. 17. This is very remarkable, that the Laws of *Plato*, *Lycurgus*, and other such wise Men are quite decay'd, while *Moses's* Statutes continue to this very time, and whose Rites and Ceremonies are observ'd by several People.

6. Many things likewise have come to pass which were foretold by *Ezekiel* long before, as that in Chap. 22. 15. *And I will scatter thee among the Heathen, and disperse thee in the Countries, and will consume thy Filthiness out of thee.* This must be understood of the Jewish Captivity under the *Romans*, not *Nebuchadnezzar*: For then the *Jews* were not dispers'd into all parts of the World, neither were they free from Pollution, by Reason of their Marriages with Strangers, and the Profanation of the Sabbath and other Sins: Wherefore they were once more lead into Captivity by the *Romans*, and then scatter'd all over the World, after that the *Romans* had subdued other Nations, and reconcil'd them by the Mildness of their Government: Otherwise it would have been no easie matter to vanquish the *Jews* by force. After the *Romans* had Conquer'd them, and  
turn'd

turn'd 'em out of Doors, they settl'd themselves in *Spain, Italy, Africk, England*, and other Countreys; so that it might be justly said of them, (as it was of the *Trojans*) that they should esteem it an Honour to be banish'd out of their own Countrey, *For before their Dominion was confin'd, but now they were Lords of all the World.* In the same manner the *Jews* after their Banishment, (like Plants which are remov'd) were admitted into the most populous Cities, and seated in the securest Parts of 'em. We know by Experience that those Cities have flourish'd most, where the *Jews* have liv'd, upon this Account, because they are very much inclin'd to promote the Trade of Merchandize. Thus we see that the Trade of *Lisbon* has mightily decay'd since the *Jews* were banish'd from thence.

7. So *Ezekiel* in Chap. 36. 13. seems to foretell that Calumny which was fasten'd upon some of the *Jews*, that they Sacrificed Children, and then drank their Blood. But this slander is not unlike that which the *Gentiles* cast upon the Christians, of their eating Infants, and drinking Men's Blood, as is plain in *Tertullian's* Apology, *Pineda's* Eccl. Hist. B. 11. c. 32. and *Justin Martyr*, who for this Reason wrote an Apology for the Christians to *Antoninus*. *Eusebius* Bishop of *Cæsarea*, (B. 5. c. 1.) also relates,



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relates, that some People in *France* us'd to asperse the Christians for eating Man's flesh. But thus it is, *Ambitious and envious Men are easily provok'd to slander.* Therefore let *John Langius* ( in the 71st Epist. of his first B. ) say what he pleases. But I solemnly protest before the God of *Israel*, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, in whose Presence I stand, that the *Jews* are so far from Sacrificing Children, or eating Men's Flesh, and drinking their Blood, that they have no Sacrifices at all, and utterly abhor the use of any Blood. Though indeed the Law of God does not prohibit abstinence from all kind of Blood, but only that of Beasts and Birds ; yet in obedience to the Doctrine of the *Rabbins*, they even abstain from that of Fish. Nay, if they perceive the least Particle of Blood in an Egg, they throw it away. And if while they are eating discern the least Drop of Blood on their Meat, or Bread, ( which may proceed from the Tenderness of their Gums ) they will not touch it any more, till it is cleans'd, or rather, they fling it away. How is it probable then, that they would drink the Blood of Men, when they can't endure any Blood in their Viſtuals ?

8. That prediction was verified which is spoken of in *Hosea*, c. 3. 4. *For the Children of Israel shall abide many days without a King, and without a Prince, and without a Sacrifice,*

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Sacrifice, &c. And this seems to be their condition at present ; and because this was to continue *many days*, therefore *Zion* says, *The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me*, Isa. 49. 14. Thus *David* also sadly complains of this thing to God, *Psal.* 89. 20. to the End.

9. The Prophet *Amos* foretells the miserable Captivity of the *Jews* under *Titus*, Chap. 1. 9. This prediction is meant of those, who escaping the Hands of *Titus*, and flying by *Palæstine*, and the Borders of *Tyrus*, were apprehended by the *Tyrians*, and sent back to *Edom*, i. e. to *Titus* and his Army : They forgetting the Covenant which their Fathers had made with the *Israelites*, whom they call'd *Brethren*, as is express'd in *1 Kings* 9. 13. *What Cities are these which thou hast given me, my Brother ?*

10. *Jonas* said, *Ch.* 3. 4. *Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed.* This Prophecy also had its Event ; for it was conditional, viz. unless it would repent. Now their Repentance was the Cause of God's altering his Sentence, and averting that Destruction which he threatned.

11. *Haggai* the Prophet says, *Ch.* 2. 9. *The Glory of this latter House shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts, and in this place will I give Peace.* Some understand, by the *latter House*, a third Tem-

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Temple, which the *Jews* expect. For they think if the Prophet had meant *Esdra's* Temple, he would have said the *Second*, not the *Latter*; because by saying the *Latter*, he implies a *Middle* one: Another reason of their Opinion is, because it is said, *In this place will I give peace*: Now, say they, under the *Second* there were a great many Wars. Others understand it of the *second* Temple, among whom are *R. David Kimchi*, and most of the *Antients*. For this seem'd to excell the former; First, in respect of *Duration*, because that lasted but 410, and this 420 Years. 2ly, in respect of the great Esteem it was in among *Foreign Princes*. Lastly, upon the Account of the great Presents that they made to it. For *Darius* and *Artaxerxes* generously bestow'd several Gifts towards building the Temple, and Divine Sacrifices. *Alexander* the Great highly reverenc'd the Chief Priest, and desir'd that he would offer Sacrifices to God for him. No body can be ignorant of *Ptolemy Philadelphus's* Bounty towards it. *Antiochus* King of Greece, (by a publick Edict) forbad all Strangers to enter the Temple, and prophane that Place, which the *Jews* had consecrated for the Service of their Religion; the same was done by *Demetrius*. To this we may refer, what was urg'd (among many other things) by a *Jewish Priest*



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Priest in defence of his Cause, at the time when the *Jews* and the *Samaritans* disputed, before *Alexander* the Great, about the Honour and Dignity of the Temple; says he, This Temple has been much reverenc'd by all the Kings of *Asia*, who have bestow'd upon it many noble Donatives. We read in *F. Josephus contr. Appion*, that *Ptolemy Evergetes*, after his Conquest of *Syria*, offer'd Sacrifices at *Jerusalem* after the *Jewish* manner to the true God, and not to Idols. *Pompey* the Great did not dare to touch, much less to rifle, the Treasury of the Temple. It was a Mistake of *Cicero's* (in his *Orat pro Plan.*) and *St. Augustin's* too, to say that he did not do it, because he would not be thought too ambitious. I am sure this Reason is too absurd; for he might have done it, if he pleased, by the Law of Arms. But the true Cause of his forbearance, was the mighty veneration which he had entertain'd for the Temple. *Philo* the Jew, out of a Letter of *Agrippa's* to the Emperour *Caius*, reports these things. *Cesar Aug.* (out of respect to the Temple) commanded that a Sacrifice should be offer'd every day out of his own Revenue. And *Julia Augusta*, his Consort, bestow'd several magnificent Gifts upon it. It was also much oblig'd to the Generosity of *Cleopatra*, Queen of *Egypt*. *Tiberius* every Year of his Reign com-

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Commanded, that a Sacrifice should be offer'd to God out of his Tribute; and so did *Nero*. But when *Eleazar* very imprudently refus'd to admit of *Nero's* Sacrifice; the Emperour chang'd his mind, and grievously persecuted the *Jews*. I shall not make mention of those, who, seeing the Religion of the *Jews*, were converted to the Worship of the true God. It is very remarkable, that all the time that *Herod* was building the Temple it did not rain, which was done (no doubt) for the greater Honour of it. All that I have said here was to shew, that the Prophecy of *Haggai* is to be understood of the Second Temple.

SECT. 6. There are other Prophecies likewise which were exactly fulfill'd.

I. *Daniel* not only foretold the four Monarchies which should Rule over *Jerusalem*, but he express'd the very Qualities and Nature of them. For one part of that Image (that was represented to him compounded of four several Metals) which was Gold, denoted the Kingdom of *Babylon*, and that exceeded all the rest in Power. That part which was Silver signified the Kingdom of the *Medes*, but this was not so extensive. That which was Brass signified the *Græcian* Empire, whose Fame (by the Exploits of *Alexander* the

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the Great ) was diffus'd all over the World, like that which makes the greatest sound. That part which was Iron set forth the *Roman*. And for as much as the Feet and Toes were part Clay, and part Iron, that signified the *Roman* and *Mahometan* Empires, which would always be at War, and never make Peace, like Clay and Iron which cannot be mingl'd together. And it seems to be intimated in *Chap. 2. v. 43.* that these two Nations would never agree. All these things we have seen fulfill'd. But here we must take notice, that the Prophet immediately mentions the Golden Statue which *Nebuchadnezzar* set up, on purpose that his Subjects should worship it. Now this was not without a Reason. For the King considering that the Image which he had seen in his Dream, denoted the four Monarchies, and that the first was his own which he now enjoy'd, resolv'd to frustrate the Design of Heaven; upon which Account he order'd a Golden Statue to be made, and commanded his Subjects to worship it, thinking by this means he should engage the Hearts of the common People, and not only eternize his own Name; but establish his Kingdom for ever. But, alas! God's designs are not so easily disappointed by humane Contrivances.



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2. *Daniel* interprets *Nebuchadnezzar's* Dream of the Tree after this manner, C. 4. v. 25. *They shall drive thee from Men, and thy dwelling shall be with the Beasts of the Field, &c.* and so it came to pass: For not long after, the King falling into a great fit of Melancholy, left his Palace, and shun'd the Sight and Conversation of Men, and liv'd seven Years in a Wilderness, taking no care at all of himself: So that his Hair was grown like Eagle's Feathers, and his Nails like Bird's Claws. This is the true meaning of the Prophecy, not that he was really turn'd into a Beast as some imagine, like the Fables of *Ovid*, and other Poets. For if that had been, he would not have thought of God, of Repentance, and Amendment of Life, and earnestly implor'd the Mercy of God, which he afterwards obtain'd; this is the Act of a rational mind, which he would not have had, if he had been a Beast. Because a rational and irrational mind cannot be in one and the same Subject, at the same time.

3. While *Belshazzar* was feasting with his Lords, an Angel's hand was seen writing upon the Wall; this the wise Men could neither read nor understand, because they read it the wrong way.

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But when *Daniel* came he read it right, and interpreting it, said to the King, *God hath numbered thy Kingdom, and finish'd it. Thou art weigh'd in the Balances and art found wanting. Thy Kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians, Dan. 5.* And these things truly came upon him, for abusing the Vessels of the Temple. For the Eunuchs believing the Prophecy, cut off his Head the next Night, and carried it to the *Persians*, (who had been vanquish'd the day before) and advis'd them to seize upon the Government. The *Persians* discerning God's Providence, and the Vertue of *Daniel*, were very favourable to the *Jews* upon this Account.

4. After a consideration of the four Monarchies from the Vision of the *Lion, the Bear, the Leopard, and the terrible Beast*, Chap. 7. he says, the second Beast (which signified the *Persian Empire*) had three

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*Ribs in the Mouth of it*, in as much as the *Persian, Median, and Babylonian* united into one. Now because *Cyrus* was suckl'd by a *Bitch*, therefore he says, his Subjects would say by reason of his Cruelty, *Arise, eat much Flesh.* The third Beast ( which represented the third Monarchy ) he says had four Heads, which denoted the four Generals that succeeded *Alexander the Great*. The fourth and fiercest Beast ( setting forth the *Romans* ) he says, had ten Horns, because from *Julius Cæsar* to *T. Vespasian* ( who destroy'd *Jerusalem* ) there were ten Emperours. Some there are who by the little Horn, which was in that Beast, understand the Pope of *Rome*. Thus likewise was this Prophecy fulfill'd.

5. After this, *Daniel* prophesies no more in the *Chaldee* Tongue but in the *Hebrew*, because both the *Babylonian* Empire, and the 70 Years Captivity of the *Jews* were expir'd. In this Language he relates the Vision of the *Ram*, c. 8. having two Horns, which represent the *Persian* Empire, under *Darius*, and the *Median* under *Cyrus*. This *Ram* ( which came out of the East ) he says, wag'd War with the other three parts of the World; and so it came to pass. For out of the West it was oppos'd by an *He-Goat*, which was *Alexander the Great*; who may justly claim that Sir-name, if we

com-



compare him with *Darius*, whom he conquer'd. The Prophet intimates the Power of *Alexander* by the notable Horn that the Goat had between his Eyes. And he smote the Ram, in as much as when he was both in the flower of his Life and his Kingdom, he lost them both. When he was strong the great Horn was broken: For *Alexander* the Great ( as *Plutarch* informs us ) being at *Babylon*, and having given Audience to several Ambassadors, was there poison'd by *Antipater's* Sons. The Prophet adds, that four notable Horns came up in the room of that which was broken, by which he means the four Generals, who succeeded *Alexander*. Again, he says, that out of one of these came forth a little Horn, which represents *Antiochus Epiphanes*, who took *Jerusalem* and slew the Priests, and the Holy Men, and took away their daily Sacrifice, which is noted in these words ; It cast down some of the Host of Heaven.

6. In the next place follows *Daniel's* Prophecy of the 70 Weeks, of which there are various Explications; for Authors wonderfully differ in reckoning their Number. See *Dan.* 9. 24. to the End, where the Prophecy is set down. In order to some Explication of it, I must needs say, that by comparing this Prophecy with the precedent ones, *Daniel* seems to be much

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troubl'd about the four Monarchies, and those Calamities which were to fall upon the *Jews*, and besides, because he receiv'd this Command, c. 8. v. 26. *Shut thou up the Vision, for it shall be for many days.* The next words denote his Concern, v. 27. *I fainted and was sick many days.* He tells us likewise, *He was astonish'd at the Vision, and that none understood it.* On one side he was considering the Expiration of the 70 Years, when the *Jews* would be releas'd from their Captivity; on the other side he was thinking of the dismal Oppressions of the *Jews* under the four Monarchies; and then he was afraid, that the Captivity would last longer by reason of the Wickedness of the People. Then it follows, c. 9. *I Daniel understood by Books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the Prophet, that he would accomplish 70 Years in the Desolation of Jerusalem.* Immediately after this he pray'd, v. 4. *And I pray'd unto the Lord my God, because God is sometimes mov'd by Prayer to revoke his Decrees.* Assoon as he had done praying, an Angel stood by him, and said, *I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding,* v. 22. Then he speedily adds, v. 24. *70 Weeks are determin'd, &c.* Here he is inform'd of the present Liberty, and the future miserable Captivity of the People.

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ple, by which they should be cleans'd from all their Iniquity; for the *Babylonian* Captivity continu'd but 70 Years, which was inflicted for their Evil ways in not observing the 7th Year, and not giving rest to the Land. But the 70 Weeks of *Daniel* make up 440 Years. Therefore when he saith, *they are determin'd upon thy People to finish the Transgression, and to make an end of sins*, he means, that after the End of 440 Years, the Captivity of the People shall ensue, by which they shall be purg'd from Idolatry, Murder and Adultery, which are the three greatest Sins. After this shall succeed Eternal Righteousness, *i. e.* there shall be no more sin, as *Isaiab* says, *c. 60. 21. Thy People shall be all Righteous.* And this all the Prophets confirm. *Daniel* moreover adds, *to seal up the Vision and Prophecy*; as if he would say, that all the Prophecies should be fulfilled, or else he means that there would be more Prophecies. For God says in *Joel*, *c. 2. 28. I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesie.* *Daniel* also says, *to anoint the most Holy, i. e. the Holy of Holies*; for under the second Temple it was not anointed, because it was not to continue for ever. And after the End of these things, *Daniel* says, *Prophecy and Sacrifices, which we have not now, shall be restor'd.*



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The Holy Scripture divides these 70 Weeks into three Parts. The first contains 7 Weeks, which make up 49 Years: For from the Destruction of the first Temple, to the building of the Second, ( which was done by *Cyrus's* leave ) were 49 Years. Now by *the anointed Prince*, which he speaks of here, he either means the High-Priest, who us'd to be anointed with Holy Oil, and is therefore call'd *Messias*; or else *Zerubbabel* Governour of *Judah*, and a Prince of the Family of *David*; or else of *Cyrus* himself, for *Isaiab* thus saith of him, c. 45. 1. *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus*

The next Division is into threescore and two Weeks, *when the Street shall be built again*, v. 25. i. e. from the first Building of the second Temple to the beginning of its overthrow ( which was when *Vespasian* came into *Judaea* ) shall be 434 Years: For the 13 Years of *Cyrus* ( under whom they began to build it ) the six of *Artaxerxes*, and the two Years Reign of *Darius* ( in whose last Year it was finish'd ) make up 21 Years. Then the *Babylonian Captivity* took up 70 Years more. Now if we compute the 414, which were between the second Year of *Darius*, and the coming of *Vespasian* into *Judaea*, the whole Number of 434 Years are made up, which are the 69 Weeks

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*Weeks of Daniel.* As for the expression, *in troublous Times*, the meaning was explain'd by the Event. For when the *Jews* went to rebuild the Temple, and laid their Arms down by them, they were so terrified, that the Enemy oblig'd them to desist. And they were very sensible of the Fury of their Enemies, when the *Gracians* and *Romans* assaulted them. *Daniel*, further says, *That after sixty and two Weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself*, which is meant of *Agrippa* the last King of the *Jews*. For he was slain at *Rome* by *Vespasian*, as his Son *Mumbas* was three Years and a half before the Destruction of the Temple, as *Josephus* testifies; the Expression, *not for himself*, signifies the End of the Kingdom, for after him the *Jews* had no other. Then it follows, *the People of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary*. Experience also shew'd this: For both the City and the Temple were destroy'd by *Titus*; but the Cause of the Destruction of the Temple was ascrib'd to the Soldiers, because the Emperour all along shew'd a Desire to save it. Next is added, *The end thereof shall be with a Flood, and unto the End of the War Desolations are determin'd*. For from the beginning to the End of the War (especially while the Seige lasted) the *Jews* suf-

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fer'd on all sides, both without and within. For not only the Besiegers, but the Besieged destroy'd the City, till at length it was quite burnt down.

The last distinction of the Weeks is imply'd in these words, *And he shall confirm the Covenant with many for one Week.* For Titus very often made overtures of Peace to the *Jews* (in those 7 Years that the War continu'd) upon condition they would obey, and become Tributaries to the *Romans*, as *Josephus* relates: *And in the midst of the Week he shall cause the Sacrifice, and the Oblation to cease.* This likewise so fell out, for by reason of the constant and terrible War the Priests omitted to offer Sacrifice for three Years and a half together. *And for the overspreading of Abominations he shall make it desolate.* Thus, that place which before was consecrated to the Service of God, shall become a Receptacle of Filthiness and Idolatry. Here this Revelation concludes, by which God informs *Daniel*, that the Captivity of *Babylon* was now over, but notwithstanding that, the *Jews* were to undergo a severer Slavery, and to endure all the dismal Calamities and pressing Evils, which were foretold should fall upon them under the fourth Monarchy.

The *Jews* of this Age interpret this Prophecy several ways, but when we reflect



flect upon the obscurity of it, we need not wonder at their various Opinions. There were some who imagin'd, that after the Conclusion of the seventy Weeks, the *Messias* would appear, and deliver to them the Dominion of the whole World. This was the Opinion of those who engag'd against the *Romans* at that time. And though they were expos'd to many great Dangers and Hardships, yet their Expectation of the *Messias* continued, because they fancied, that he would come in the midst of all their Afflictions. Wherefore those words, *To finish the Transgression*, they so expound, as if after the end of the seventy Weeks, their Sins should be forgiven them. Others that dissent from these, understand the Prophecy of the Destruction of the *Jews*; and for that Reason would not fight at all. But when *Titus* was Successful, they acknowledged him for their Sovereign. And these the rather seem to accommodate the Prophecy to *Vespasian*, because of the unhappy Fortune of their Countrey. *F. Josephus* is of this Opinion, in the Wars of the *Jews*, B. 7. c. 12. His words are these: *That which chiefly encourag'd them to go to War, was an obscure Prophecy (recorded in the Scripture) that one of their Neighbouring Princes, should be Master of all the World about that time.* Some under-

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*understood it of themselves, and many wise Men were deceiv'd by this Interpretation: For in truth, the Prophecy clearly meant the Empire of Vespasian, who was created Emperor in Judæa. But there are some Men that can't avoid their fate, though they foresee it. So some interpreted the Signs one way, and some another, till their Folly was confuted by their own, and their Countries ruin. To this belongs the Observation of Tacitus, B. 5. of his History. A great many were perswaded, that the Priests in their Writings foretold, that about this time, the East should grow powerful, and that the Jews should be Lords of the World: Now these obscure places only meant F. Vespasian, and Titus. But the common People, (as Men usually wish) interpreted this mighty Success to themselves, in Case it should so fall out in the midst of their Calamities. Suetonius also takes notice of this Prophecy, in the Life of Vespasian c. 4. It was (says he) firmly believ'd all over the East, that, at this time, the Jews should enjoy an universal Dominion. This (though foretold of the Roman Emperors, and was verified in the Event) the Jews understood of themselves, and so rebell'd; and having slain the Governour, they also routed the Forces that the Deputy of Syria, was bringing for his Assistance. Servius likewise (in his Commentaries upon Virgil's *Aeneids*, B. 4.)*

B. 4.) tells us, That *Suetonius* (in his *Life of Cæsar*) says, That the Oracles all over the World declar'd, that the invincible Emperour was born.

Now most of the wise and prudent Men, being of this Opinion, *Josephus* (who was a discreet Man, and understood the Scriptures very well) thought that after *Jotapata* was taken, the Power of the *Jews* was quite extinct. Therefore he acquainted *Vespasian* (as if it had been reveal'd to him from Heaven) that the Prophets foretold he should be an Emperour. Not that I believe *Josephus* had the Spirit of Prophecy, for that no one had (as the ancients affirm) under the second Temple, but he said this, to ingratiate himself with *Vespasian*. For when *Jotapata* was taken within forty seven days, according to his Prediction, and when by a wonderful Sagacity he foresaw that the *Romans* would take *Jerusalem*, he so manag'd his Discourse and his Affairs, that he was sure his Prophecy would be Credited. Several of the *Jews* believ'd that *Jerusalem* could not be taken, but by one that was to be an universal Monarch. Hence we read in the *Talmud*, that R. *Johanan Ben Zachai* making his Escape out of the City (for fear of the Seditions that were within) was apprehended, and being brought before  
Vespa-



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*Vespasian*, he saluted him Emperour; but when the Emperour denied that he was the Person, he told him, That he was, and that he was appointed so by a Divine Prophecy. For *Isaiab* says, Chap. 10. 34. *And Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one*, i. e. by one that Rules over all the World. Thus we see the Completion of this Prophecy.

7. Now while *Daniel* was much troubled about the Afflictions that would fall upon the *Jews* under the four Monarchies, God was pleas'd to raise his sinking Spirits, by the Prophecy of a particular happy Condition that they were to enjoy, Dan. 11. 2. *Behold, there shall stand up yet three Kings in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than they all*. i. e. There shall be but three Kings of *Persia* after *Cyrus*. Some Men pretend to prove out of History, that there were fourteen Kings of *Persia*, others that there were but seven. But their mistake proceeds from this, because they make *Cyrus* to be the first, when he was the Eleventh; to whom succeeded *Cambyses*, *Artaxerxes* and *Darius*, and these are the three which the Prophet means. Now *Darius* descending from the *Jews* by his Mother's side, he gave them leave to build the Temple, and commanded *Ezra* to teach the People out of the Law of *Moses*;

ses ; and *Nehemiah* was to take Care of the building of the Walls. But *Darius* affecting the Empire of Greece, was unfortunately slain by *Alexander* the Great. Furthermore, *Daniel* says, v. 2. *A mighty King shall stand up, (i. e. Alexander) and shall be divided towards the four winds of Heaven, v. 3. i. e. in respect of those who succeeded him.* The Prophet also foretels several other things, as concerning *Seleucus*, the King of the *Assyrians* and *Babylonians*, and *Ptolemy Lagus*. This is enough concerning the Completion of some Prophecies, whose Events certainly depended upon *Man's Free-will* ; from hence we conclude, That God not only foreknows those things, which he determin'd to do after some extraordinary manner, but likewise future Contingencies.

Hither we may refer what *Josephus* says, B. 10. c. ult. *Daniel wrote after the same manner, concerning the Roman Empire, and the Destruction of Jerusalem. All these things that were reveal'd to him by God, he wrote down, and left to Posterity ; that when they saw what he foretold, was punctually fulfill'd, they might wonder that God should have so signal a Regard for him ; and that the Errour of the Epicureans might be confuted, who will not allow of Providence, and deny that God governs*

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governs the World, but only assert that it moves by a natural *Impetus*; now if this wanted a Director (as they say) even as we see Ships cast away for lack of a Pilot, and Chariots overturn'd and broken that have none to guide them, so would this also be destroy'd by its own immoderate Motion.

For this Reason, when I reflect upon the Prophecies of *Daniel*, I can't forbear condemning the Ignorance of those Persons, who deny God's Providence over humane Affairs; for how could his Prophecies be fulfill'd, if all things were carelessly, and indifferently manag'd? This is my Opinion, and if any Man be of another, let him enjoy it.

I have but briefly mention'd these things, but if any one desires to see all the Controversies of the *Jews*, about the Explication of *Daniel's* Prophecies; he may read *Abravanel's* Treatise, which the Learned *Buxtorf* has translated into Latine. But this must be acknowledg'd, that all Prophecies are obscure, and the meaning of them can't be understood, till the Completion of them. It is God's Pleasure that they should be so, that there may be room for Free will in all our Actions. For if Men knew that any thing would necessarily, and inevitably fall out, according to  
God's



God's decree, they would despair of good, and be careless about that which was Evil; but that they might never be dejected, God is pleas'd secretly to Act with Men in his Prophecies.

S E C T. 7. Some there are, who deny God's Prescience, upon the Account of these, and the like Expressions, that we meet with in the Scripture. *Now I know that thou fearest God, Gen. 22. 12. And the Lord came down to see the City, 11. 5. and in another place, I will go down and see, 18. 21.* from these Passages they Fancies it may be prov'd, That God does not foreknow future Contingencies. But if the Reader pleases to look into my *Reconciler* upon *Genesis*, he may meet with Satisfaction concerning such sort of Phrases. This I must repeat in short, that wise Men usually express themselves after this manner, when out of two Evils they would chuse the least; and this is the Case here. For, when God knows all things before hand, that which he foreknows, he must either publickly and particularly discover it, or propose it under ambiguous Phrases. If the first, then Men, knowing the Decrees of God, would be very careless about their Life. If the latter, then Expressions, less becoming God,

God, must be us'd ; now which method does he prefer ? Why, he chuses rather to speak, as if he was ignorant of what will come to pass, because he would condescend to our Capacities, and use a less accurate form of Speech, that he might not abridge the Freedom of our Actions. After the same manner the Scripture ascribes to God, Eyes, Hands, &c. not because he has such Members ( for he is incorporeal ) but only to denote his Providence and his Power. *Maimonides* and others say, that the Law speaks *after the manner of Men*, that it may be the better understood. Another sort of Men object, that if God knows all future Contingencies, and takes care of the World ; why then do good Men suffer and wicked Men Prosper ? This was answer'd before out of the Prophets. The Psalmist also takes notice of this, *Psal.* 73. 11, 12, 13, &c. and *Malachy*, Chap. 3. 14.

But *David* expresses himself thus, *Psal.* 94. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *They slay the Widow and the Stranger, and Murder the Fatherless. Yet they say the Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. Understand, O ye brutish among the People ; and, ye Fools, when will ye be wise ? He that planted the Ear, shall he not hear ? He that formed the Eye, shall he not see ? He that teacheth Man know-*

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knowledge, shall not he know? Upon this, Maimonides in his Directory tells us, That two eminent Physicians (who wonder'd at these words) said, If we may argue after this manner, it would follow then that he who made the Mouth may eat; he that form'd the Lungs may speak, &c. But pray observe, (Courteous Reader) and I will inform you, how much they mistake the Sense of this Argument.

It must be granted, that an Artificer can make no Tool, unless he knows the use of it: As for instance, A Needle-maker could not make a Needle in that shape, which is fit for sowing, except he knew the use that it was to be put to, and the same may be said of other Instruments. Now some of the Philosophers imagin'd, that God can't apprehend some particular things, because they are not the Objects of Sense. To these I answer, that God's Perception of things is not sensual, but intellectual. Therefore I'll deduce my Argument against them thus, from the Existence of the Senses. If God was ignorant how Vision is perform'd, how could he form the Eye? Is it probable, that all the various Humours of that Organ, should be contriv'd by Chance? In a word, can any wise Man believe, that all the Humours, Coats, and Optick Nerves; (which are so nicely dispos'd, and perform the Act of Vision) could be sinuated in that posture accidentally;

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No;



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No, they are thus design'd by Nature, as Physicians, and Philosophers confess. Now Nature, they also acknowledge, is not endu'd with an Intellectual, and commanding Faculty. But this Order, this Management, (which is like that of an ingenious Work-man) proceeds, they say, from an intellectual Principle, and according to my Opinion, is the result of an understanding Being, which is the Author of all the natural Faculties, that Creatures are qualifi'd with. Now if this Intellectual Being, is ignorant of this thing, and does not perceive it, how could Nature be deriv'd from it, that designs an Effect which she knows nothing of? Therefore David justly calls these Men Brutes, and Fools, Psal. 94. 8. Hitherto Maimonides. As for what relates to the Adversity of good Men in this Life, I have largely Discours'd of it in my Reconciler upon Genesis.

**SECT. 8.** Three things remain, which I shall dispatch with Expedition. 1. I am to prove that Man is created with a Free-will, and that it is in his Power to make Choice of Life or Death. 2. That God's Concurrence is necessary in humane Actions; for, a Divine Assistance, besides Man's endeavour, is requir'd in order to Salvation. 3. That God wisely governs our Actions, and directs them to such an end,

end, that makes us capable of Rewards or Punishments.

Reason is enough to convince us, That Men are endu'd with Free-will. *Maimonides* says, Why are there Laws? Why Affirmative, and Negative Precepts? Do not these plainly shew us, That if Man pleases he may obtain Salvation by virtuous Actions, or utterly ruin himself by vicious ones? No Body ever threatn'd to inflict Punishment upon him, who was unable to obey, or was compell'd to transgress the Law. Therefore it would be unjust for God to punish Men for that, which they must necessarily do. If there is no such thing as *Free-will*, the Care of preserving Life would cease, Admonitions would be needless, and we must deny all Guilt. Let him then that is destin'd to be Hang'd, Kill'd, or Drown'd, dispatch himself as soon as he can. But after all, we see that God does not always bless the slothful and careless, but the diligent and industrious. Man's Condition (says *St. Cyril*) would be worse than that of Brutes, if these acted by instinct, and those by force. What signifie (says *Cicero*) Laws, Friends, and good Advice? There's no Man (says *R. Joseph Albo*) who would take care of his Life, or regard his Actions, if he had not *Free-will*. But Expe-

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 To force men to  
 have the will they have not

rience evinces the contrary, for Houses,  
 Towns, Arms, Traffick, Husbandry and  
 such like are not Signs of Security, but  
*Sollicitude*. The Scripture likewise attests  
 this, because in that we read, that *Adam*  
 at the beginning was endu'd with *Free-will*,  
 and for that Reason excell'd all other  
 Creatures; for the Sun necessarily, and  
 always shines, the Fire burns, and Water  
 moistens; but Man can do what he plea-  
 ses. In this respect also Man is said to be  
 made after the *Image of God*. Neither is  
 it usual for God to command the perfor-  
 mance of any thing, which is not in Man's  
 Power to do or let alone. Therefore it was  
 necessary that *Adam* should have a *Free-*  
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 Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, lest  
 I should say God was unjust (which is Blas-  
 phemy to imagine) when he punish'd him,  
 if he had it not.

This is the Opinion of all the *Talmudists*,  
 and for this Reason they say, *We find from*  
*the Law, the Prophets, and other Holy Writers,*  
*that a Man can walk in which way he pleases.*

It is thus prov'd by them, First, out of  
 the Law, where God had said to *Balaam*,  
 Numb 22. 12. *Thou shalt not go with them,*  
*Thou shalt not Curse the People*; neverthe-  
 less he knowing that he was resolv'd to  
 go, permitted him. Then out of the Pro-  
 phets,



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phets, *Isaiah 48 17. I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to Profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go. As if he should say, I will always Conduct you in the right way, but if you will not regard me, and will go wrong, I will leave you to your Free-will. Lastly, out of the Holy Writers, Prov. 3. 34. Surely he scorneth the Scorners, but he giveth Grace unto the lowly.*

From whence it appears, That God hates impious Men, for their Impiety; but he confers his Grace on the Godly and Religious. Hither also we may refer that saying of the *Talmudists*, Shall an idle Person think to leave the Care of his Affairs to God? No; for it is said, *Deut. 15. 10. For this thing the Lord thy God, shall bless thee in all thy Works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For this Reason they advise us, that we should be careful to avoid Evil, and choose Good; because they are both in our Power.*

Hence this is a common Proverb among them, *When the Pestilence rages in the City, make hast and get out of it. And they believe, that this is intimated in the words of Isaith, Chap. 26. 20. So it is twice repeated in the Proverbs, Chap. 22. 3. 27 12. A prudent Man foreseeth the Evil, and hideth himself, but the simple pass on, and are pu-*

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*nish'd.* Upon this Account the *Jews* are exceeding industrious in the time of a Plague, to take Care of themselves, for which they incur the Censures of some.

*Plato, Aristotle,* and other Philosophers, (who had only the Light of Nature) were of this Opinion. *Plato* says, that Free-will is the Privilege that Men have above all other Creatures. Therefore we see that all Men are very diligent in their Professions, that they defend themselves against their Enemies, and by all ways shun Evil, and follow that which is Good. We see also, that a Man is blam'd or commended (and that justly) upon the Account of his method of Acting, the end that he proposes, and the means that he uses. We never find fault with a Child, or one that is asleep, or a Fool, for doing any Body a mischief; but if we Judge by the Event, they deserve Reprehension as well as other People; from whence it follows, that all Men agree, That no Person is to be prais'd, or reprov'd, but he that Acts voluntarily and deliberately. So that if a Man has not free will, Advice, Reproof, Reward and Punishment are vain and ineffectual.

When therefore it is said in the Scripture, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself; some interpret it, that all the works of the Lord manifest his Perfection and Power.*

Power. *Maimonides* says the meaning is, According to his Will, then is added, yea even the wicked for the day of Evil. As much as to say, God hath created all things for his own Glory; and therefore when he punisheth wicked Men, he manifests the Glory of his Justice. But in my Judgment the meaning is, God created all things for himself, i. e. That they might serve him; for the wicked is like a Rod in the hand of God, with which he chastiseth the ungodly: Such an one was *Nebuchednezzar*, by whom he Corrected the rebellious and disobedient *Jews*.

But lest any one should be impos'd upon by the saying of *R. Jebuda*, That from our Formation in the Womb, our Marriage with such a Person, is unalterably determin'd. We must take notice, that *Maimonides* affirms that Matrimony is reckon'd among the Precepts, and therefore no one is compell'd to Marry such or such a Person, because God has not precisely predestinated any one to the observance of the Precepts. Besides, it is expressly commanded in the Law, Deut. 20. 7. That a Man that hath betroth'd a Wife, and hath not taken her, shall not go in the Battel, lest he die, and another take her. Now if this Marriage was immutably determin'd, how could his Wife be married to another?

Furthermore, we must understand, that the *Cabbalists* are of Opinion, that at the beginning of the World, Souls were made by Pares, *i. e.* a Male and a Female together; and for this Reason they affirm, that Matrimony is either allotted as a Reward, or a Punishment according to Mens Actions. So if a Man is religious and deserving, he is joyn'd to that Person, who was created with him. But if not, (for his Punishment) he is wedded to one that is very disagreeable to his Humour, and proves a Scold, and a Trouble to him as long as she lives. Therefore, they say, That Parents sometimes sell all that they have, to marry their Children to a discreet and sober Person. And that whosoever rather marries for Vertue and Honesty, than for Beauty, God blesses him, and sends him many Children. Now all this actually depends upon Man's *Free-will*.

SECT. 9 So much for Man's *Free-will*; I shall now treat of God's Concurrence with humane Actions. All the *Jews* agree in this, that God concurs with virtuous Actions, both by assisting them, and promoting them; for his Aid is necessary to their Perfection. Hence our *Rabbins* say, That as soon as ever a Man sets about a good Action, he has God's assistance.  
Hence



Hence comes that Saying of their's, when they speak about the Contest, which is between the rational and sensual Appetite, *without God's succour, it is impossible to subdue the sensual Appetite.* To this agrees what *Hosea* saith, Chap. 13. 9. *O Israel thou hast destroy'd thy self; but in me is thine help.* There the Prophet shews that wickedness springs from a Man's self, but that every good Action is from God, as the assisting Cause; upon this Account the Psalmist addresses himself thus to God, Psal. 79. 9. *Help us O God of our Salvation,* and *Jeremiah*, Lament. 5. 21. *Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned.* So *Solomon*, Prov. 20. 24. upon which a Learned Rabbi says, though Man has understanding, nevertheless God's assistance is necessary for him. Thus *David* says, Ps. 37. 23. *The steps of a good Man are order'd by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way,* as much as to say, God indeed perfects our Actions, but Man also has a Duty to perform. Because we owe all the Good we have to God; therefore we are oblig'd to Honour him with it, Thus the Psalmist rightly observes, Psal. 65. 4. *Blessed is the Man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts, i.e. in Heaven, and in the Company of Saints.* Give me leave to explain this by an Example. I will pitch upon *Joseph* and *Tartarin*.

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*quin.* This being in love with a pretty Lady, committed Adultery with her; the other seeing the Beauty of his wanton Mistress, bravely and piously refus'd to lie with her.

Now what was the Cause of the different and contrary Motions in these two Persons? Without doubt the regular Appetite of this, and the depraved one of *t'o-ther*; for because *Tarquin* was wholly lead away by his Lusts, and despis'd Chastity, God left him to his vitious Desires; but because *Joseph's* Inclinations were virtuous and chaste, God discover'd to him the Filthiness of the Act, the Injury to his Master, and the Torments of Hell; and by the Consideration of these things, God assisted him, and prevented the Commission of so notorious a Sin: Hence the *Rabbins* us'd to say upon those words, *Gen. 39. 10.* *He hearken'd not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.* He would not lie with her in this World, lest he should suffer with her in the next. Now because these Actions depended upon both their Free-wills, therefore one deserves Eternal Praise and Glory, and the other Everlasting Disgrace and Ruine. If we allow any such thing as Rewards and Punishments, we must necessarily admit of Free-will. Wherefore God always supports and helps those Persons that mind their Duty, and are

are industrious, but disregards the Lazy and Slothful.

SECT. 10. As to the third thing I am to prove, *Maimonides* affirms, that if men's Sins are very heinous and notorious there is no room for Repentance; and in confirmation of his Opinion he us'd to alledge that of *Isaiah* 6. 10. and *2 Chron.* 36. 16. So that according to him, God harden'd the Heart of *Pharaoh* for his Sins, *Exod.* 14. 4. Likewise *Sihon* and *Og* King of *Basan* were so wicked, that their Repentance could not avert their Punishment. Agreeable to this Opinion it is, that God sometimes takes away *Free-will* from Sinners. Certain it is that God deprives Men of their Estates, Honours, Life and Liberty for their Iniquities. The Ancients too were of this Mind. But what we read in *Tanbuma*, is worth our Observation. Three things, says the Author, God has put into our Power, *viz.* our *Hands, Feet and Mouth*, and there are three things which are not in our Power, *viz.* our *Eyes, Ears and Nose*; for we see, hear, and smell many things that are offensive to us. God oftentimes debars us the use of those things which are in our Power, by reason of our Sins. Thus God wither'd the Hand of *Feroboam*, which he reach'd out to seize the Prophet; and made



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made *Balaam* bless the *Israelites*, whom he design'd to curse. Therefore it is evident, that God very often obstructs Men's Actions, and can abridge their Power. Hence *Abrahanel* confesses, that when God intends to reward or punish any Person, nothing can prevent it. An instance of this he says we have, in the Infatuation of *Achitophel*, because God was resolv'd to punish *Abfolom*. To this belong the words of *Jerem.* 10. 23. *2 Sam.* 17. 14. *Isa.* 14. 27. *Isaac Arama* is of opinion, that Repentance is never too late: For, says he, it is always acceptable to God. But he affirms, that for the Murder of our Neighbour, Repentance is ineffectual, and therefore we can't escape Punishment for that.

If I may have leave to declare my Judgment in this Case, I do firmly believe that God never forces, or takes away the use of our Free-will, but always mercifully disposes the means, as they are more or less agreeable to our inclinations; like the *primum mobile*, which carries round the inferior Orbs, yet every one of them hath a distinct Motion. I shall illustrate my meaning by this Example, God design'd that the *Israelites* should continue in the *Egyptian* Bondage so many Years, and that *Joseph* should be advanc'd above all his Brethren. Now God compell'd no body to accom-

accomplish this Design ; but he only so order'd the means, that *Joseph* might be sold to the *Midianitish* Merchants, and then this way he might come into *Egypt*. In like manner God intended to display the miraculous Signs of his Power among the *Egyptians*, but how ? by hardening *Pharaoh's* Heart, so that he should have no use of his Free-will ? No, but by so contriving it, that the King might have occasion, by the free Use, or rather the Abuse, of his Will, of hardening his Heart. Thus when he saw his own Magicians work the same Miracles which *Moses's* did, he disregarded them. He perceiv'd that the Plagues could be easily remov'd, and so was not much concern'd at them ; but obstinately refus'd to dismiss the People, till he was surpriz'd with the Slaughter of his Son, and all the First-born of his Subjects. Thus we must understand, that God harden'd the Hearts of *Sihon* and *Og* the King of *Bashan* : For the *Israelites* had sent Messengers to the *Edomites*, the *Ammonites*, and the *Moabites*, to request a Passage through the Borders of their Country, but being deny'd, they went another way. Now *Sihon* and *Og* expected that they would do the same to them, but when they saw they would not, they took up Arms and stiffly oppos'd their Passage, but unhappily, for they

they were presently conquer'd. Here God only gave an opportunity to their perverseness, but did not in the least force their *Wills*, that he might punish them. God also determin'd to divide *Solomon's* Kingdom, but which way did he effect it? not by compelling *Rehoboam*, but by giving occasion, that by the Advice of his young Counsellours (by whom he was directed) he might refuse to lessen the People's Taxes, and so *Abijah's* Prophecy was fulfill'd. Thus I think all the Places, where God seems to deprive Man of his Free-will that he may punish him, may be explain'd.

For as Princes know how wisely and prudently to manage their Affairs, that they may obtain their Designs: So does God (who is the King of Heaven and Earth) in like manner dispose all things (without impairing our Free-wills) that he may effect his Resolutions, that he may mercifully recompence some, and justly punish others. To this belong the words of *Solomon*, Prov. 21. 1. *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water, he inclineth it whithersoever he will.* He does not say, he forceth, but inclineth; and this is all that I propos'd to prove.

SECT. II. There still remains one difficult and intricate Question, which I will endeavour



endeavour to solve; and it is this. How can Man's Free-will and God's Fore-knowledge be reconcil'd together. This seem'd inexplicable to *Cajetan*, very crabbed to *Vasquez*, and the *Jews* unanimously confess, that it is very abstruse. Hence *Maimonides* says, that God's Knowledge is not an *Accident* ( as Man's is ) but is the very Essence of God. Wherefore as Men can't comprehend the Essence of God ( according to that in *Exod.* 33. 20. *There shall no man see me and live :* ) So neither can they apprehend how God fore-knows things, *Isaiah* 55. 8. It is evident ( says the same Author ) that Men have Free-will, and no Body doubts but God knew all things from Eternity, but it is still a Question how God knows things, and yet Man have the Liberty of his Will. For to enquire which way God knows things, is as much as to desire the Knowledge of God himself, both which cannot be attain'd in this Life. To this belongs the Answer of *Bias*, who was ask'd how God was acquainted with humane Affairs and Actions? It is certain, says he, there is a God, whose Providence is over all; and it is likewise certain that we have a *Free-will*; but how God knows our Actions, is easie to conjecture, but difficult to explain.

*R. Abraham Bar David*, ( a Rival of *Maimonides* ) says, that *Maimonides* indeed did propose the Question, but did not answer it, and therefore he had better have let it alone. Wherefore this *Rabbi* (offering his Opinion to explain the manner of God's Prescience) says, That the Astrologers, by looking upon the Stars, can guess at a great many things that will come to pass; in like manner God knows what will happen to Men by the Course of the Planets, which he has ordain'd already. Now when it is in Man's Power to avoid the influence of the Stars by his good or evil Actions: He says, that God fore-knows that Act or Motion of his Will, and which way he designs to direct it. Which Prescience, he affirms, necessitates, no Body's Actions. But this, ( as the Author himself acknowledges ) is not a satisfactory Answer to the Question.

Wherefore *R. Isaac Bar Seiat* in my mind, advances the clearest Solution. God, says he, from Eternity order'd all the Affairs of the whole World, and by his Divine Wisdom and Sagacity saw all the Effects that ever would be produc'd; which tho' they may depend ( I speak of humane Actions ) upon Man's Free-will, to exist, or not to exist; yet nevertheless, God infallibly and certainly fore-saw, and fore-knew

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knew them. Man does not act after this, or that manner, because God knew beforehand that he would; but on the contrary, because Man acts so and so, therefore God knew it from Eternity. This is the Opinion of *R. Isaac Arama*, *Justin Martyr*, *Origen*, *Damascene*, *Chrysostom*, *Hierom*, *Augustine*, and *Cyril*. This Solution I firmly embrace my self. Here is the Case, if a Person being plac'd upon an high Tower, or Mountain, sees one Man go from South to North, another from North to South; by this Act of Vision he does not necessitate the voluntary Motion of those Men; so it is here. For God's Eternity is correspondent, to the distance of Places; for he knew all things from Eternity, as if they were but just done. I will explain it by another Similitude; let us suppose a Circle, from whose Center may be drawn several Lines to the Circumference; Now in respect of this Circumference we may consider a first and a last, or a distance between these Lines, which in respect of the Center is none at all; so in reference to God, there is no such thing as first and last, past and future, but all things are present to him. And this, I believe, *Mercurius Trismegistus* means, when he compares God to a Center, and a Circumference, in respect of his wonderful Prescience. And if we reflect upon what *Mai-*



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*monides* said before, that our Knowledge is not like God's; he means nothing else, but that God knows things after a more excellent manner, than Men do; for he equally sees things that are past, future, and present, but we only those that are present. Therefore he says, it is very difficult for a humane Understanding to comprehend the manner how God fore-knows things, because his Knowledge is not distinct from his Essence.

SECT. 12. Because the Authority of the Sacred Writings are to be preferr'd before all Reason and Experience, I design for the Establishment of this Opinion, to produce the Words which God spoke to *Moses*, near the Time of his Death, *Exod. 31. 16.*  
*And the Lord said unto Moses, behold thou shalt sleep with thy Fathers, and this People will rise up, and go a whoring after the Gods of the Strangers of the Land, whither they go to be amongst them, and will forsake me and break my Covenant which I have made with them.*

Here is a plain Instance of God's fore-knowledge: And that the People might never forget it, he adds, *v. 19. Write ye this Song for you, and teach it the Children of Israel, &c.* That God's Prescience does not interfere with our Free-will, or impose  
any

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any Necessity upon it, is plain from v. 21. *For I know their Imagination which they go about even now, before I have brought them into the Land which I swear.* Behold how God's Prescience and Man's Free-will exactly agree together. That the Will is not forc'd, is manifest from the Punishments which are inflicted on the Sinner, v. 21. *When many Evils and Troubles are befallen them.* That is a famous Saying of the Rab-  
bins, *All things are seen, and yet Liberty is granted.*

To conclude, I will now compendiously sum up what I have treated of in this Book,

1. I have shew'd, that our Life has a *Term*,

2. That this may be consider'd according to the Constitution of the Body, or the Planets, which variously act on the Body; or as some will have it, in general, In respect of the present and the past *Times*.

3. That the *Term* of Life is alterable.

4. That man's Life may be contracted several ways, *viz.* by the Providence of God, by Nature, and by Chance.

5. That our Life may be prolong'd by the Meditation on God's Law, and the Observation of his Precepts; one of which

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belongs to the Mind or Theory; the other to the Will or Practice.

6. That man may freely make use of Remedies and Physick when he is sick.

7. That though God fore-knows future Contingencies, Nevertheless, every one may act virtuously or wickedly if he pleases.

But whether he pleases  
to live thus or so - may  
perhaps not depend  
upon his pleasure, but  
his pleasure upon it  
rather. *Edw.*

**F I N I S.**

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